"THE MAN IN CRESCENT TERRACE" by SEABURY QUINN

Weird Tales

MARCH

15¢

A novelette of ominous omens and double-evil . . . . .

"TWICE CURSED" by Manly Wade Wellman

How Listerine Antiseptic can help to head off a Cold or lessen its severity

WHEN you feel a cold coming on, it's likely to be a sign that a virus has infected you and that millions of germs called the "secondary invaders" are threatening a mass invasion of your tissues through throat membranes.

That's the time to "baby" yourself a bit and get started at once with the Listerine Antiseptic gargle regularly. Here's why:

Kills "Secondary Invaders"

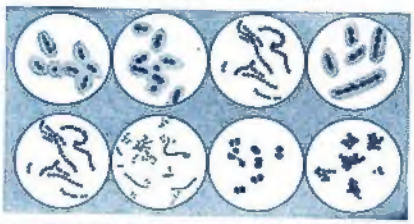
Listerine Antiseptic reaches way back on throat surfaces to kill millions of the "secondary invaders". . . the ugly germs, according to some authorities, that cause so much of the misery you know so well.

Often this prompt, delightful precaution may halt the mass invasion of these germs and nip a cold in the bud, so to speak.

Germs Reduced up to 96.7% in Tests

Fifteen minutes after a Listerine Antiseptic gargle, tests showed bacterial reductions on mouth and throat surfaces ranging up to 96.7%, and up to 80% one hour after a Listerine Antiseptic gargle.

"SECONDARY INVADERS"



TOP ROW, left to right: Pneumococcus Type III, Pneumococcus Type IV, Streptococcus Viridans, Friedlander's Bacillus. BOTTOM ROW, left to right: Streptococcus Hemolyticus, Bacillus Influenzae, Micrococcus Catarrhalis, Staphylococcus Aureus.

Fewer Colds in Tests

If your cold has already started, the Listerine gargle, taken early and often, may help reduce the severity of the infection.

Bear in mind Listerine's impressive record made in tests over twelve years: Those who gargled with Listerine Antiseptic twice a day had fewer colds and usually milder colds than those who did not gargle . . . and fewer sore throats.

So, when you feel a cold coming on, eat sparingly, keep warm, get plenty of rest, and gargle with Listerine Antiseptic. It may spare you a lot of trouble.

LAMBERT PHARMACAL CO., *St. Louis, Mo.*

THE SAFE ANTISEPTIC

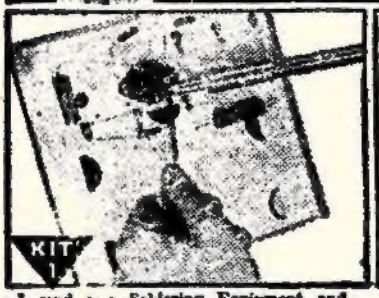
FOR ORAL HYGIENE

I Will Show You How to

Learn RADIO

by Practicing in Spare Time

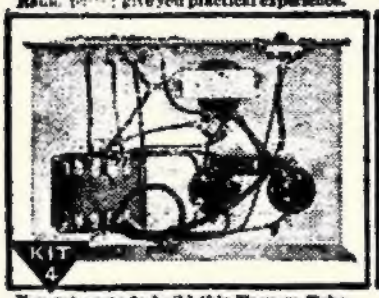
I Send You 6 Big Kits of Radio Parts



I send you Soldering Equipment and Radio Parts; show you how to do Radio wiring; how to mount and connect Radio parts; give you practical experience.

Early in my course I show you how to build this N.R.I. Tester with parts I send. It soon helps you fix neighborhood Radios and earn EXTRA money in spare time.

You get parts to build Radio Circuits; then test them; see how they work; learn how to design special circuits; how to locate and repair circuit defects.



You get parts to build this Vacuum Tube Power Pack; make changes which give you experience with packs of many kinds; learn to correct power pack troubles.

Building this A. M. Signal Generator gives you more valuable experience. It provides amplitude-modulated signals for many tests and experiments.

You build this Superheterodyne Receiver which brings in local and distant stations—and gives you more experience to help you win success in Radio.

KNOW RADIO—*Win Success*

I Will Train You at Home—SAMPLE LESSON FREE

Send coupon for FREE Sample Lesson, "Getting Acquainted with Receiver Servicing," and FREE 64-page book, "Win Rich Rewards in Radio." See how N.R.I. trains you at home. Read how you practice building, testing, repairing RADIOS with SIX BIG KITS of Radio parts I send you.

Future for Trained Men Is Bright in Radio, Television, Electronics

The Radio Repair business is booming NOW. Fixing Radios pays good money as a spare time or full time business. Trained Radio Technicians also find wide-open opportunities in Police, Aviation, Marine Radio, in Broadcasting, Radio Manufacturing, Public Address work, etc. Think of the boom coming now that new Radios can be made! Think of even *greater* opportunities when Television and Electronics are available to the public!

Many Beginners Soon Make $5, $10 a Week EXTRA in Spare Time

The day you enroll I start sending EXTRA MONEY JOB SHEETS to help you make EXTRA money fixing Radios in spare time while learning.

MAIL COUPON for sample lesson and 64-page book FREE. It's packed with facts about opportunities for you. Read about my Course. Read letters from men I trained, telling what they are doing, earning. MAIL COUPON in envelope or paste on penny postal. **J. E. Smith, President, Dept. 6EM, National Radio Institute, Pioneer Home Study Radio School, Washington 9, D. C.**

My Course Includes Training in

TELEVISION • ELECTRONICS

OUR 31st YEAR OF TRAINING MEN FOR SUCCESS IN RADIO

Good for Both—FREE

MR. J. E. SMITH, President, Dept. 6EM
National Radio Institute, Washington 9, D. C.

Mail me FREE, your sample lesson and 64-page book. (No salesman will call. Please write plainly.)

Name ..... Age.....

Address .....

City ..... State.....4FR

(Please include Post Office Zone Number)

Weird Tales

ALL STORIES NEW — NO REPRINTS

MARCH, 1946 Cover by Lee Brown Coye

NOVELETTES

TWICE CURSED . . . . . **Manly Wade Wellman** **10**
Do you know of those who are afraid of memory shadows and others who never fear the devil except on a dark night?

THE MAN IN CRESCENT TERRACE . . . . . **Seabury Quinn** **34**
The thing used its spear like a woman testing cake with a broomstraw — only the "cake" was a human!

SHORT STORIES

THE BOGY MAN WILL GET YOU . . . . . **Robert Bloch** **27**
That was what was nice about him — the mystery, the not-knowing. . . .

DEAD MAN'S SHOES . . . . . **Stephen Grendon** **48**
Those who are stricken with that curious and terrible hallucination should be thankful — for it warns of something far more terrible

CHANU . . . . . **Jim Kjelgaard** **54**
Look closely at his cultured face and you will discern to your amazement a snarling mouth and great fangs

THE JONAH . . . . . **Emil Petaja** **64**
Remember the "Marie Celeste"? Here's an explanation for that and other sea mysteries that could not be explained!

TUNNEL TERROR . . . . . **Allison V. Harding** **72**
Strange things can happen in a vehicular tube — especially when the tunnel goes places it isn't supposed to!

THE TRAVELLER . . . . . **Ray Bradbury** **82**
A strange family, with no real life to any of them!

VERSE

TREE WOMAN . . . . . **Dorothy Quick** **33**

FORGETFUL HOUR . . . . . **Yetza Gillespie** **90**

SUPERSTITIONS AND TABOOS . . . . . **Irwin J. Weill** **71**

THE EYRIE AND THE WEIRD TALES CLUB **91**

Except for personal experiences the contents of this magazine is fiction. Any use of the name of any living person or reference to actual events is purely coincidental.

Published bi-monthly by Weird Tales, 9 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 20, N. Y. Reentered as second-class matter January 26, 1940, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. Single copies, 15 cents. *Subscription rates:* One year in the United States and possessions, 90¢. Foreign and Canadian postage extra. English Office: Charles Lavell, Limited, 4 Clements Inn, Strand London, W.C.2, England. The publishers are not responsible for the loss of unsolicited manuscripts although every care will be taken of such material while in their possession.
Copyright, 1945, by Weird Tales. Copyrighted in Great Britain.
Title registered in U. S. Patent Office.
PRINTED IN THE U. S. A. Vol. 39, No. 4

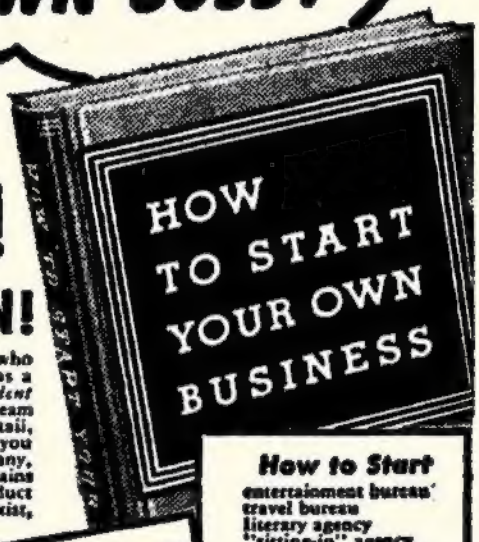
D. McILWRAITH, *Editor.* LAMONT BUCHANAN, *Associate Editor.*

YES SIR! YOU TOO CAN BE YOUR OWN BOSS!

BE INDEPENDENT!

GET ALL THE MONEY YOU EARN!

Your own business! Your own boss! That's the dream of every man who wants to come and go as he pleases, who wants to "make or break" as a result of his own judgment—who wants a chance to become *independent* instead of being tied down to a job. Now *you* can make that dream come true, for here is a book that will help you. It gives, in complete detail, the facts about 60 different kinds of business that anyone can start—tells you how much money is required to begin, what kind of experience, if any, is necessary—and what the main considerations are for success. It explains what each venture needs, how to start, how to get business, how to conduct your business. It points out the dangers and disadvantages where they exist, and gives you a description of the work involved.



SPARE TIME OR FULL TIME

Many of the businesses suggested can be started in your spare time or by some member of your family until you are ready to take over. Many of the ventures require no capital or very little. Many of the businesses require no inventory of merchandise. Some of the suggestions are for outdoor work and some are for those who work at a desk. A special chapter tells Service Men how to get the most help from the Government, including provisions of the "GI Bill of Rights."

PRICE ONLY $1.98

How to Start

entertainment bureau
travel bureau
literary agency
"sitting-in" agency
vacuum-cleaner repair service for babies
hostess service
home repair service
poultry business
baby-furniture mart
phonograph record exchange
camera exchange
photographic business
weekly newspaper
where-to-get-it service
local delivery service

and many others — all completely explained so you can decide which of these, or which similar enterprise, fits your abilities, capital and capacity.

7 DAYS' TRIAL!

"How to Start Your Own Business" is a book of nearly 200 pages, 6½" x 9½" in size, completely indexed for ready reference. It is printed in large, clear, easy-to-read type and is durably bound. Since every individual must place his own value on the information contained in this volume, the publishers offer to send it on 7 days' trial. If it is not worth much more than its price to you, simply return it and it will not have cost you a cent. It is not necessary to send any money now—just mail the coupon. When the book arrives pay the postman only $1.98 plus delivery charge for the regular edition—or $2.48 for the De Luxe edition. Your money will be refunded upon return of the book within 7 days, without question. If remittance is mailed with coupon we will pay delivery charges and the same money-back guarantee applies.

SEND NO MONEY!

You have thought many times about the advantages of working for yourself. The longer you wait the less likely you are to start. As you get older your fear grows greater—the time to start is NOW, whatever your age. Don't wait. Mail coupon now and settle for all time whether you are going to run your own business, or depend on having a job.

FOREMOST BOOKS, Dept. 2NU
353 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.

FREE EXAMINATION COUPON

FOREMOST BOOKS, Dept. 2NU
353 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y.

Please send me a copy of "How to Start Your Own Business." When it arrives I will pay postman:

☐ $1.98 for regular edition
☐ $2.48 for the De Luxe edition
(please check the edition you want)

plus delivery charges. If I am not delighted with the book I will return it within 7 days and you will refund my money.

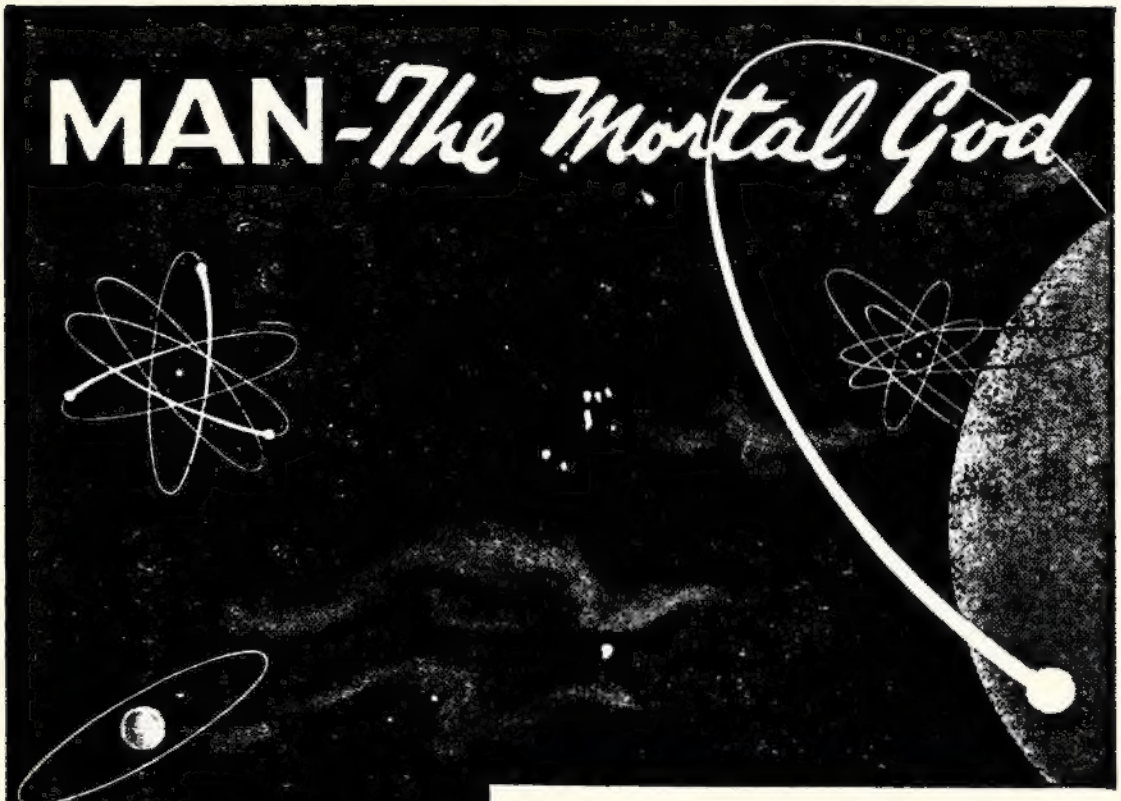
NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

CITY, ZONE, STATE .....

( ) *NOTE: If remittance accompanies coupon we will pay delivery charges. Same money-back guarantee applies.*

MAN—*The Mortal God*



Unseen Worlds At *Your* Command!

Possibly there are universes beyond this one to be realized. Perhaps within the nucleus of each atom is the energy of a thousand dynamos—awaiting man's command. But for all of this outward conquest, are you still at the mercy of mysterious *indwelling* forces? No man is a master who has not explored self—to whom the worlds of *inspiration, mental creating,* and *intuition* remain dark continents of the mind. Would you like to shatter the illusions of time and space—know what is real and what are the oppressing limitations in life? Would you like to *know* the true purpose of your conscious existence—and experience the Cosmic forces which influence it?

ACCEPT THIS *Free* BOOK

Now is the time to discard obsolete, traditional thought. We are on the horizon of a new era. Learn how nature was intended to obey your commands. Write the Rosicrucians, a world-wide fraternity (not a religion), for their fascinating free book, "The Mastery of Life." It will throw new and searching *light* upon you and your universe.

Address SCRIBE: J. A. V.

THE ROSICRUCIANS (A. M. O. R. C.)

SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA, U. S. A.

AMAZING NEW

GOLD SEAL POLICY

PROVIDES *All* THIS PROTECTION FOR JUST

$1 A MONTH

CASH BENEFITS *BIG* ENOUGH To Be WORTHWHILE!

SICKNESS BENEFITS! Policy pays for loss of time due to sickness, a regular monthly income for as long as 3 months, up to..... **$100.00 PER MO.**

ACCIDENT BENEFITS! Policy pays for accident disability at rate up to $100 per month, for as long as 24 months, or..... **$2400.00**

ACCUMULATED CASH! Policy pays for accidental loss of life, limb or sight up to $4,000, accumulated to..... **$6000.00**

PLUS SICKNESS, ACCIDENT and MATERNITY *HOSPITALIZATION PLAN*

Policy pays "hospitalization benefits" for sickness, accident or maternity, including hospital room at rate of $5.00 per day, operating room, anaesthesia, drugs, dressings, laboratory, X-ray, oxygen tent and other services, even ambulance service. Total hospital benefit as specified is over..... **$650.00**

The SERVICE LIFE INSURANCE CO.
450-W Service Life Building OMAHA 2, NEBRASKA

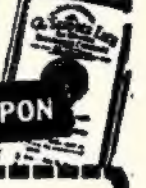
CASH for Almost Every Emergency!

Now, added millions can afford all-around insurance protection. Here is a combination SICKNESS, ACCIDENT & HOSPITALIZATION policy *for just a dollar a month* that pays in strict accordance with its provisions for ANY and ALL accidents, ALL the common sicknesses, even non-confining illness and minor injuries. It pays disability benefits from the very first day. NO *waiting period!* NO this is not the usual "limited" policy. It's an extra-liberal policy that provides *quick* cash to *replace lost income*, pay doctor and *hospital bills*, for medicines and other pressing demands for cash that invariably come when sickness or accident strikes.

POLICY ISSUED *By Mail* AT BIG SAVINGS!

NO MEDICAL EXAMINATION!

Ages 15 to 69. Actual policy sent by mail for 10 Days Free Examination. NO cost! NO obligation! NO salesman will call! See this policy and judge for yourself. It's the protection you need and should have at a price you can afford. Just mail coupon below! But do it today. Tomorrow might be too late!



FREE 10-DAY INSPECTION COUPON

The SERVICE LIFE INSURANCE CO.
450-W Service Life Bldg., Omaha 2, Nebraska

SEND without cost or obligation your extra-liberal "Gold Seal" $1-A-MONTH Policy for 10 Days' Free Inspection.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....AGE.....

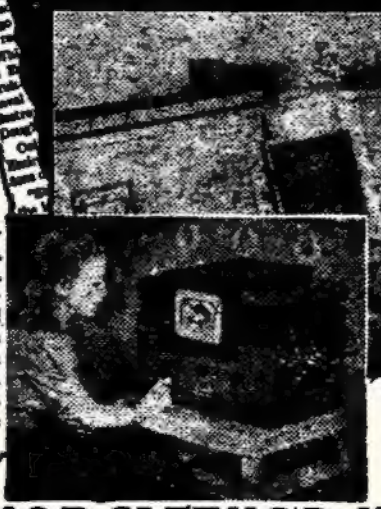
CITY.....STATE.....

BENEFICIARY.....

GET INTO RADIO ELECTRONICS & TELEVISION NOW!

Hundreds of Industries Need Radio and Television Men Now and for Great Future Demands

The men trained in demand is more all not only in Radio and Television, but in Aviation, Transportation, Communications, ... in the designing, engineering and operation of hundreds of industries today and for years to come. Learn how great the field is for YOU... How you may GET INTO BUSINESS FOR YOURSELF. Mail the coupon now.



Send for FREE Lesson and Prove to Yourself How Quick and Easy You Get Ahead in Radio by the NEW

SHOP METHOD HOME TRAINING
OF THIS GREAT, ESTABLISHED RESIDENT SCHOOL

Learn by Doing!

Use Real Radio Equipment Furnished with Your Course

Experience is the best teacher and you learn by experience with the National Shop Method of Home Training. You build a long distance, high fidelity, superheterodyne receiver—build many other circuits and conduct experiments with the big kits of standard radio parts *included with your training at no extra cost.*

Here is the kind of training that gives you a first-hand knowledge advanced and approved means and methods. Not only do you understand the basic principles of the industry but you become expert with practical experience.

Send the coupon for detailed information on all the *different* departments of this course of training.

CHOOSE YOUR FUTURE

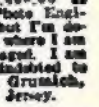
1. Radio is a $6-billion business. Radar, just starting, already does $2-billion a year.
2. Thousands of men needed for stations and communication companies—for operation and maintenance.
3. Half million jobs in Television right at start is the opinion of industrial leaders.
4. Limitless future in Electronics—in the home and industry.

Get ready for Television and FM. Get your share of the Radio Service Business. Take your place in industry as an Electronics expert. Here is a *sensationally improved way* for you to get the right training. Study in spare time—odd hours, even minutes—and have the *advantage of actual shop experience* behind you.

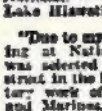
This exclusive shop method of home training comes to you right from one of the *world's greatest vocational educational centers*—the resident training shops and experimental laboratories of the great NATIONAL SCHOOLS. It is sound, based on the actual experience of qualified instructors, engineers and technicians—men who are *right in the industry.*

Shop Method Training Wins Good Jobs

"My latest offer was $5,400.00 as Radio Photo Engineer... but I'm doing well where I am now engaged. I am deeply indebted to National." — Joseph Grunisich, Lake Hiawatha, New Jersey.



"Due to my training at National I was selected to instruct in the laboratory work of Navy and Marines."—R. R. Wright, Blackfoot, Idaho.



"I believe National offers the best course to be had.... Keep up the good work."—O. K. Ivey, Washington, D. C.

Read what hundreds of other enthusiastic students have written about National Training. Send in your coupon today.

National Schools has been training men for *higher pay and greater opportunity* for more than a third of a century. Fill out and mail the coupon below for details.

Grasp This Opportunity

Experts agree that Radio, Electronics and Television is right at the start of the greatest boom in history. Right now is the time to prepare yourself for BIG SUCCESS and LIFETIME SECURITY. Take part in the great expansion. *The field is wide open.*

You need no previous experience—no electrical or mechanical knowledge. National Shop Method Home Training is *complete in itself—up-to-date.*

Make use of your free time NOW to build yourself a great future. See how quickly you progress—how easy it is to get a firm, practical understanding of Electronics in all branches.

See for Yourself

Take the first step now. *Fill out, and mail the coupon below.* Be among the first to get into the *big money*—to win a position of importance—to have a BUSINESS OF YOUR OWN.

The industry is crying for trained men everywhere. It holds out rich rewards—a prosperous future. *Well trained men ONLY are needed.*

Examine the National Shop Method of Home Training carefully in the quiet of your own home. *Make up your own mind.* No salesman from National will call on you. *Fill out and mail the coupon today.*

Learn for yourself just how easy this SHOP METHOD HOME TRAINING gives you the practical, down to earth experience you can never get from theory alone.

NATIONAL SCHOOLS

LOS ANGELES 37, CALIFORNIA EST. 1905

MAIL OPPORTUNITY COUPON FOR QUICK ACTION

NATIONAL SCHOOLS, Dept. NS-2 *(Mail this in an envelope*
4000 South Figueroa Street *or paste on a postcard.)*
Los Angeles 37, California

Send me FREE the two books mentioned in your ad including a sample lesson of your course. I understand no salesman will call on me.

NAME ..... AGE.....

ADDRESS .....

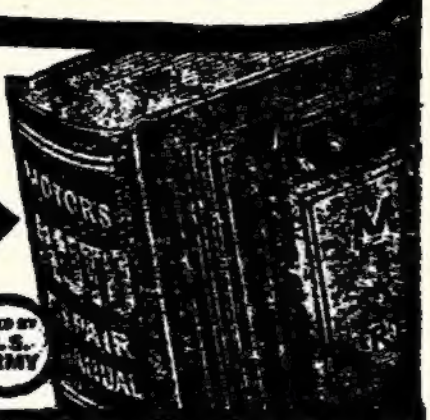
CITY ..... STATE.....

Include your zone number.

Now YOU Can Lick Any AUTO REPAIR JOB!

IN LESS TIME—WITH LESS WORK

FREE 7-DAY OFFER



MoToR's New AUTO REPAIR MANUAL shows you how to service and repair ANY part of ANY car!

No auto repair job is too tough when you've got MoToR's AUTO REPAIR MANUAL! YOU can repair anything from carburetor to rear end—quickly, easily, right! Just look up make, model, and the job in the quick index—and go to work! Clear, illustrated instructions lead you step by step.

To make such an amazing book possible, the engineer-editors of MoToR Magazine collected and "broke down" 150 official factory shop manuals for you, spotted all the vital repair information you need, dove-tailed it all together into ONE handy, easy-to-understand book.

No Other Manual Like It!

This BIG book—640 pages, 8½x11 inches, bound in sturdy covers—brings you nearly 200,000 service, repair, adjustment, replacement, tune-up facts on every car built from 1935 to 1942. More than 1000 cut-away photos, diagrams, drawings show you exactly WHAT to do and HOW to do it! Used by the U. S. Army, trade and technical schools everywhere, thousands of auto servicemen.

Now YOU—*without cost*—can see for yourself what a wonderbook MoToR's Auto Repair Manual really is. TRY it—FREE for 7 days! Learn first-hand how it can *pay for itself* the first few times you use it.

used by U.S. ARMY

SEND NO MONEY

7-Day Free Examination

Just mail coupon below—*without money!* When the postman brings your book, pay him nothing. First make it *show* you what it's got! Unless you agree this is the greatest time-saver and work-saver you've ever seen—return book in 7 days and pay nothing. Mail coupon today! Address: MoToR Book Department, Desk 69B, 572 Madison Ave., New York 22, New York.

Clear, Pictured Facts on Every Job on Every Car Built Since 1935!

Nearly 200,000 service and repair facts on all these makes:

American Bantam	Ford	Oldsmobile
Auburn	Graham	Overland
Austin	Hudson	Packard
Buick	Hupmobile	Pierce Arrow
Cadillac	Lafayette	Plymouth
Chevrolet	La Salle	Pontiac
Chrysler	Lincoln	Reo
Cord	Lincoln Zephyr	Studebaker
De Soto	Mercury	Terraplane
Dodge	Nash	Willys

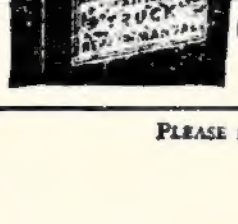
640 big pages; including 50 pages of carburetor text, charts, illustrations, covering all models. Over 450 charts, tables: Tune-up Chart; Valve Measurements; Compression Pressures; Torque Wrench Reading; Starting Motor; Engine Clearances; Generator; Clutch & Brake Specifications; Front End Measurements, etc., Engines; Electric, Fuel, Cooling, Lubricating Systems; Transmissions; Universals; Front Ends; Wheels; Rear Ends, etc.

Same FREE 7-Day Offer Applies on New MoToR's TRUCK REPAIR MANUAL!

For mechanics, truck specialists, service stations, fleet owners. Covers EVERY job on EVERY truck made since 1936! 1400 pictures, 900 pages, 300,000 facts. Used by Armed Forces. Warranted to contain every essential fact you need to know. Sturdy binding, size 8½ x 11.

Covers all types Gasoline Engines; Diesels and Hesselmans. Fuel Systems. Governors. Lubrication Systems. Ignition Systems. Starters. Generators. Clutches. Transmissions. Axles. Torque Dividers. Transfer Cases. Brakes. Steering, etc., etc.

Offered on same FREE 7-Day examination as Auto Repair Manual. Check box in coupon at right.



MoToR Published by MoToR, The Leading Automotive Business Magazine. MoToR's manuals assure high standards of repair work.

MAIL COUPON NOW FOR 7-DAY FREE TRIAL

MoToR Book Dept., Desk 69B, 572 Madison Ave., New York 22, N. Y.
Rush to me at once: (Check box opposite book you want).

☐ **MoToR's AUTO REPAIR MANUAL.** (*formerly "MoToR's Factory Shop Manual"*). If O.K. I will remit $1 in 7 days, and $1 monthly for 4 months, plus 35c delivery charge with final payment ($5.35 in all). Otherwise I will return book postpaid in 7 days. (Foreign price, remit $7 cash with order).

☐ **MoToR's TRUCK REPAIR MANUAL.** (Described at left in the box.) If O.K. I will remit $2 in 7 days, and $2 monthly for 3 months, plus 35c delivery charges with final payment ($8.35 in all). Otherwise I will return book postpaid in 7 days. (Foreign price, remit $11 cash with order).

Name_____ Age_____

Address_____

City_____ P.O. Unit No. (if any)_____ State_____

Occupation_____

☐ SAVE 35c! Check here if enclosing full payment (check, money order) WITH coupon. We pay 35c shipping costs.

Weird Tales

is on the air . . . . in

STAY TUNED FOR TERROR

This programme is adapted by ROBERT BLOCH from his stories which have appeared in WEIRD TALES, the narrator being Craig Dennis.

STAY TUNED FOR TERROR is produced by Neblett Radio Productions, with the active cooperation of WEIRD TALES MAGAZINE . . . for the enjoyment of fantasy fans everywhere.

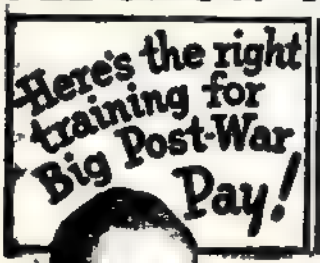
LOOK FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS IN YOUR LOCAL NEWSPAPER giving the broadcast time and dates in your area.

~*~

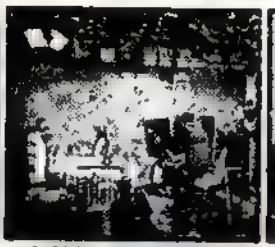
And remember to . . . .

Stay Tuned for Terror!

I'LL SHOW YOU HOW TO SUCCEED IN RADIO



A RADIO SERVICE BUSINESS OF YOUR OWN



A GOOD JOB IN RADIO & TELEVISION BROADCASTING

RADIO-ELECTRONIC SERVICE ENGINEER

J. L. Sprayberry, one of the country's foremost Radio Teachers.

BE A RADIO ELECTRONICIAN

Now! You Can Prepare at Home in Spare Time for Amazing Opportunities Ahead in RADIO—ELECTRONICS—TELEVISION

The offer I make you here is the opportunity of a lifetime. It's your big chance to get ready for a wonderful future in the swiftly expanding field of Radio Electronics INCLUDING Radio, Television, Frequency Modulation and Industrial Electronics. Be wise! NOW'S the time to start. Opportunities ahead are tremendous. No previous experience is necessary. The Sprayberry Course starts right at the beginning of Radio. You can't get lost. It puts the various subjects across in such a clear, simple way that you understand and remember. And, you can master my entire course in your spare time. It will not interfere in any way with your present duties. Along with your Training, you will receive my famous BUSINESS BUILDERS which will show you how to make some nice profits while learning.

Prepares You for a Business of Your Own or Good Radio Job

My training will give you the broad fundamental principles so necessary a background, no matter which branch of Radio you wish to specialize in. make it easy for you to learn Radio Repair and Installation work. I teach you how to install and repair Electronic Equipment. In fact, you'll be a fully qualified RADIO-ELECTRONICIAN equipped with the skill and knowledge to perform efficiently and to make a wonderful success of yourself.

Sprayberry Training Gives You Both TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE—SKILLED HANDS

There's only one right way to learn Radio Electronics. You must get it through simplified lesson study combined with actual "shop" practice under the personal guidance of a qualified Radio Teacher. It's exactly this way that Sprayberry trains you . . . supplying real Radio parts for learn-by-doing experience right at home. Thus, you learn faster, your understanding is clear-cut, you acquire the practical "know-how" essential to a good-paying Radio job or a Radio business of your own.

I'll Show You a New, Fast Way to Test Radio Sets Without Big Equipment

The very same Radio Parts I supply with your Course for training pre experience in Radio Repair work may be adapted through an exclusive Sprayberry wiring procedure to serve for complete, fast, accurate Radio Receiver trouble-shooting. Thus, under Sprayberry methods, you do not have one cent of outlay for manufactured Test Equipment which is not only expensive but scarce.

Read What Graduate Says "One Job Nets About $25.00"

"Since last week I fixed 7 radios, all good-paying jobs, and right now I am working on an amplifier system. This job alone will net me about $25.00. As long as my work keeps coming in this way, I have only one word to say and that is, "Thanks to my Sprayberry training' and I am not afraid to boast about it." — ADRIEN BENJAMIN, North Grosvenordale, Conn.

DON'T PUT IT OFF!

Get the facts about my training—now! Take the first important step toward the money-making future of your dreams. All features are fully explained in my big illustrated FREE Catalog which comes to you along with another valuable FREE book you'll be glad to own. Mail coupon AT ONCE!

JUST OUT! FREE! "How to Read Radio Diagrams and Symbols"

. . . a valuable new book which explains in simple English how to read and understand any Radio Set Diagram or circuit. Includes translations of all Radio symbols. Send for this FREE book now, and along with it I will send you another big FREE book describing my Radio-Electronic training.

GET FREE BOOKS

Sprayberry Academy of Radio
F. L. Sprayberry, President, [illegible] Public, Colorado

Please rush my FREE copies of "How to MAKE MONEY in RADIO ELECTRONICS and TELEVISION" and "How to READ RADIO DIAGRAMS and SYMBOLS."

Name ..... Age.....

Address .....

City ..... State.....

(Mail in plain envelope or paste on penny postcard)

Twice Cursed

By MANLY WADE WELLMAN

". . . see by this image, which is thine own, how utterly thou has murdered thyself."

—EDGAR ALLAN POE,
William Wilson.

I

BUT everything was a wonder now that I was in New York again, and pleasantly wonderful, too—not horridly wonderful, like the sniper-haunted jungles and bullet-ripped beaches I had striven for in the war I hoped would be the last forever. I still wore my uniform, since I had no other clothes, with on the right breast a discharge device in bright yellow thread and on the left my color-mixture of campaign ribbons. A sandy-haired civilian bought me a drink in a bar near Union Square and assured me that battle-fears weren't as terrible as fears of the unknown. He argued that you knew what to expect in war. What could you tell someone who had never heard a shot fired in anger, a shot fired in anger straight at him? Of that nothing is more unknown than the outcome of the battle you are in, with Joe and Mac and the other friends you love dropping limp and dead beside you or trying to stuff back their insides that have been blown out, and the thought coming to you a dozen times a minute that perhaps your side is losing? I plastered on a smile, thanked him for the drink, and went out to walk down Fourth Avenue among the bookshops. And there it was, not far from Tenth Street, rather different because it hadn't a table in front with shabby old volumes for a dime or a quarter, but with its windows jammed with interesting things and its sign:

THE SPOORN, BOOKSELLERS

I have never decided if the bizarre arrangement in those windows was an arrangement at all, but it was impressive. The biggest book was bigger than a volume of the *Congressional Record*, bound in some pale leather, with strange printing that might be Arabic or Urdu, and a colored picture of something ten-armed and scowling and staring. Near this, a Summers, *Geography of Witchcraft*, flanked by paper-bound *Albertus Magnus* and *The Long Lost Friend*. There were some recent publications—*Tell My Horse* by Hurston, *Hex Marks the Spot*, by Ann Hark, and poor William Seabrook's *No Hiding Place*. One shabby book looked like a pasted-up collection of scraps and manuscript notes, entitled in ink *The Jersey Devil*. This was like old times, when I found all my thrills and chills in strange writings about ghosts and devils.

I walked in. The shop itself couldn't have been more perfect if it had been built as a set for one of those B-picture scaries at the Rialto. All the lights were close to the door, quite glaring, and the shelves that stood endwise to us at the back had no lights at all, so that the spaces between them were like gloomy caves. Under the lights were some counters and tables, with cards saying things like: RARE AND CURIOUS—ASK CLERK—COLLECTOR'S ITEM. On the wall hung a painting, one of those clutters that can be put with any edge up and be something different and startling.

From one table I took up a book. On its fly-leaf was written in pencil: *Of Brownyis and of Bogilis full is thys Buke.* I'd read that somewhere—Gawain Douglass or Robert Burns? Or had Burns quoted Douglass at

There are some things more deadly than war experiences—like working in a particular bookstore!

the head of some poem? *Tam O'Shanter*, maybe?

"Yes, Sergeant?" someone was half whispering at my elbow, evidently with eyes on those three stripes I wore. I put down the book and turned.

THE Spoom's proprietor was smaller and slighter than I, though I am hardly a big man. His clothes did not look expensive, but they fitted him beautifully, there is no other word for it. Some figures are like that, any cheap suit in their size arrays them as though

Heading by A. R. TILBURNE

brilliantly tailored. He was long-jawed and sharp-nosed, smiling harshly, with bracket-lines all around his mouth and his tin-colored eyes. His hands, with their great long fingers and great long nails, rubbed together rather like Uriah Heep's. "What would you like to see?" he was prompting.

To tell the truth, I could hardly buy anything worth money. I had received only part of my separation pay and had spent most of it. "I'm not exactly a customer," I ventured, smiling back.

"I see," said the proprietor, and rubbed his hands faster. "A job, then. What's your name, Sergeant?"

The thought of working in a bookshop was brand new to me, and intriguing. I wondered why I hadn't considered it before. "I'm Jackson Warren," I told him, "and I'm not a sergeant any more."

"Yes, I know. We hadn't really planned on your being here until tomorrow morning, but—"

This was where training and experience in strange and surprising situations helped. The fellow was actually hiring me, pretending some kind of second sight or other sympathy that had prepared him to do so. I hadn't expected to be employed so soon, or in any field I liked so well. Even as I decided not to act mystified or stupid, he was naming a salary not too small, and discussing hours of work. "One day you can open the shop in the morning and stay until six," he said, "and the next come at noon and remain open until nine at night. Since you're here today, sit down in the office back there read what I've written about the job. You're intelligent and liberal-minded. I know. Tomorrow morning you'll be ready to start."

I went past those dark bookshelves at the rear of the room, and into a little cell not much larger than a telephone booth, with its walls solidly lined with old, curious and strangely-titled books. There was room for a chair, a little table with a typewriter and a telephone. I sat down with the pencilled sheets of paper he indicated, and began to read and puzzle.

Plainly those instructions had been written lately and hurriedly. My name was at the top, and the first sentence was enough to make my eyes pop. "I expect great things from you, on the word of your sponsor. . . ."

"My name," said the proprietor, "is, of course, the Spoorn."

"The Spoorn?" I repeated. "It's a Scotch name?"

"Yes," and he was gone. I reflected that the heads of Scottish clans used the definite article to name themselves—the MacDonald, the MacLeod, and so on. I had never heard of Clan Spoorn, or of the head of a clan who ran a bookshop in a foreign country. As I returned to my written pages, the telephone purred on the table, and I picked it up. "The Spoorn Bookshop," I said briskly.

"This is Jackson Warren." That was not a question, but a confident statement.

"Jackson Warren speaking," I told the transmitter.

"Hmmm," said the man at the other end, in a way I sometimes use myself. "You don't understand. I'm Jackson Warren. I wanted to call about the job—"

"But I have the job," I assured him. "I've just been hired. What can I do—"

"Hmmm," he said again, and hung up. I shook my head over it, all by myself in that tiny office, and resumed my reading.

"As an ex-soldier and an ex-sergeant, you know without being instructed what is meant by loyalty and discretion," the Spoorn had written for me. "Any good employee will keep his council while learning—"

The telephone rang again, and again I picked it up. "The Spoorn Bookshop," I announced into it.

"Did I hear you right?" said the same voice as before. "You called yourself Jackson Warren."

"Ex-Sergeant Jackson Warren," I replied. "Just out of the service and into the retail book trade. What can I do for you?"

"You can explain," was the sharp rejoinder. "It so happens that I'm Ex-Sergeant Jackson Warren."

"Is this a gag?" I laughed, not very heartily. "There can't be two of us."

"I wonder." There was a moment of moody silence. "Will you do me a favor?"

"Such as?" I prompted.

"When you leave there, will you meet me?" He sounded eager and a little shaky. "Somewhere near there?"

I frowned over it, then told him the name of the bar where the civilian had instructed

me about known and unknown fears. "I'll be there as soon after six as possible," I informed him. "Right?"

"Right, and thanks."

I hung up. The Spoorn had come to the door.

"Why," I asked him, "should anybody know I was working here?"

"Why shouldn't he know, if he's a friend of yours?" asked the Spoorn. "Wasn't it arranged some time ago?"

To those questions I had no answer to give. I took up the sheets. "May I take these with me? I'll absorb them between now and opening time tomorrow."

He nodded his head to grant the request, and I folded them and slid them into my shirt pocket. I left almost at six, and went to the bar.

But as I sat on a stool and ordered a beer, it came to my mind that neither I nor the strange man on the telephone had offered any basis for recognition. There were half a dozen men at that bar, and unless I asked each in turn if he had taken part in a strange conversation that day—

But someone came in at the door, and toward me. I stared straight into the questioning eyes of myself.

II

THE man was young, twenty-six years old or so. He was perhaps five feet nine inches tall, sparely made, a little wide in the shoulders.

His hair was dark and short, with a square face and wide-set brown eyes and a creasy dimple in his chin. He wore an army uniform, a little worn but neat, with the three stripes of a sergeant and the device that betokened honorable discharge. All these things I recognized instantly. I had seen them so often before, in mirrors.

He and I smiled at the same moment and with the same perplexity. He spoke first: "You look enough like me to be my twin brother."

"I haven't any twin brother," I said. That was out of Wodehouse.

"Neither do I. This is a funny thing. I came here to meet somebody with the same name as I have."

"I'm Jackson Warren," I told him.

He put out a hand just the size and shape of mine. "So am I. Let's start talking."

I picked up my beer and we went to a booth. A waiter brought him a beer like mine, and he began talking rapidly.

"Let's get it straight at once," he said. "That's my job. Rowley Thorne—my friend—knew I was looking for work, and called up the Spoorn shop and fixed it for me to start there tomorrow. What are you doing with my job and my name and my face?"

It never took me too long to get angry. "The job you can have, because apparently the Spoorn thinks I'm you," I told him. "But I grew up with the name and face and they're as much mine as yours. I won't change the name, and I don't think you'll get far changing the face."

For a moment he glared back. His expression must have been a mirror-replica of mine. Then he relaxed a little, and the hardness became mystification. "We're going at this wrong," he said. "I don't blame you for being sore if you're as rattled as I am. Maybe it's not too much that we look alike—we're only a little more than average size, and we both have the usual Anglo-Celtic face. As to the name, Warren's not uncommon, but Jackson is—for a Christian name, anyway."

"I was born in Lynchburg, and my people named me for Stonewall Jackson," I explained, also a little less heatedly.

"And I'm Carolinian, though I haven't kept much of the accent," said my companion. "I was named for the other Jackson, Andrew. Let's go back to the last remark but one, as somebody says in *Alice*. I thought you'd been pretty elaborate about gnawing under me into that job. But you said you didn't want it."

"Oh, I want it. I'm not very rich or anything. But," and I drew the Spoorn's instruction sheets from my pocket, "I haven't really started, and I won't start where I don't really belong. You can have these, study them—they tell what your duties will be—and go in there tomorrow. The Spoorn won't know the difference."

The other Jackson Warren took the sheets, but did not glance at them for a moment. "You know, I've heard of a case like this before. At Leavenworth Prison it was, I think—two men sentenced there, the same size and with faces alike enough to fool their

mothers. Both named West, and I can't remember the first name, but they both had it. Fingerprints were the only difference. I wonder if ours are alike, or anywhere near alike."

"I was born in Lynchburg," I said again, "May 8, 1921—"

"Me, too!" he cried, so sharply that one of the two customers glanced our way. And now neither of us spoke for a moment, until I tried to say something.

"There's too much coincidence here. Too much."

"There's no coincidence," he said harshly. "This was planned some way or other. But how? Why? I wonder if the two of us aren't in a jam."

"Read those instructions," I suggested. "Since you're the right man for the job, they may make sense to you."

HE BEGAN to read, and I sipped at my beer. After some minutes he folded the papers carefully, picked up his own glass and drank deeply.

"They make sense, all right," he said. "Who do Rowley Thorne and the Spoorn think they're fooling?"

I couldn't answer that, so I waited for him to go on. He was studying my campaign ribbons. "Pacific Theater," he said. "Well, we're different there. I was in Europe, and for a while in Iceland. I had time on my hands, and dug into witchcraft and demonology—"

"For which Iceland is famous," I added.

"I'm not very surprised that you know that," he said. "Somebody up there gave me the name of Rowley Thorne in the States, and when I came back here he and I got together. He suggested that I take this job, and I was grateful for it. Wait a second, are you part of whatever his scheme is?"

"I'm part of no scheme that I know of, and everything I told you is true." I dug out papers and orders I had been given at the separation center, and he took them and read my name on them. He passed them back as though they weighed a ton. Then he tapped his fingers on the Spoorn's written pages.

"Here's the payoff. The Spoorn is running a funny bookshop, a very funny bookshop indeed. What Rowley Thorne sent me there for, and what the Spoorn hired me—or you—for, was the stuff I studied in Iceland. But I don't want anything to do with it."

"It's a shop full of peculiar books," I said, and told him a little about it. He heard me silently, nodding a little as if I was telling him a lot.

"I have a notion," he said when I finished. "Let's both go up there and wreck the place. Wish we had some grenades."

"Is it that bad?"

"Worse. What little I know—and I don't want to know any more—wait. We'll have to talk this over. Where are you staying?"

I had no place, and said so. My baggage was checked at the Pennsylvania Station.

"Come to my place, then. I've got a big room, with a bed and a couch, on West Nineteenth. I meant what I said a moment ago, this is no coincidence. We've both been put into this as duplicate cogs in some sort of machine. Let's talk and think and get the machine running the right way."

"That's a deal," I said, and our identical right hands grabbed at each other again. "Come up with me to get my bag. But what'll we call each other? We can't both be Jackson."

"We're different Jacksons," he reminded. "I'll call you Stonewall."

"You be Andy," I said, and he grinned. I liked that grin, perhaps because I'd seen it so often in my shaving mirror. We finished our beer and started out together.

A man turned from the bar to stare at us. His eyes grew as big as dollar watches, and he set the highball he was holding back on the bar.

"Not another drop," he stammered to the bartender. "Never again. Not when I see 'em in twos—"

Andy and I went out laughing at the tops of our voices. I mention that because we had so little to laugh at in the days that followed.

III

ANDY'S lodging was on West Nineteenth Street, and we went there after eating dinner in the Village. His street was full of immense, loud trucks, but the rooms—he had two, part of a widow's apartment—were at the back. We took

more beer up with us, and sat talking, more about ourselves than about The Spoorn's shop.

It kept adding up to a case of complete duplication. We found we were both orphans, reared by aunts. We'd both been half-mile runners in high school, we'd both gone to college—he at Chapel Hill, I at University of Virginia—and left in junior year to enlist. Even our studies and grade-levels were alike. We both liked to read about the supernatural; he'd logically poked into Icelandic demon-lore, just as I'd tried to learn something about devil-devil and praying to death when I was stationed in the Solomons.

"I wonder if we aren't both avoiding one consideration," said Andy, pouring beer into my mug.

"You mean the doppleganger business," I nodded. "The way I used to hear it, everyone has his replica, either a spirit or a living creature. You come face to face with it, and you fall dead. But I never felt better in my life, Andy."

"Me, too," he informed me. "If we wrote all this down it wouldn't be convincing."

"It sounded convincing enough when Edgar Allan Poe wrote it," I argued. "Remember *William Wilson?*"

"I've been remembering all evening. Likewise Charles Dudley Warner—*My Double and How He Undid Me.* Probably we ought to decide which of us is the victim and which the nemesis. Toss a coin—"

"Roger," and I pulled a dime from my pocket, flipped it in the air and let it fall. It rolled, struck a wide crack between two floor boards, and remained on edge.

"There's our answer," said Andy, handing the dime back to me. "We're both in this thing together. Let's keep on drinking, or we'll not get much sleep."

We didn't, anyway. The reveille habit was strong in both of us, and we woke before dawn. Andy pulled open a closet.

"I'm a little up on you," he smiled. "I've got some civvies, two or three suits. Pick one out. Shirts in the drawer. You'll buy some for yourself today or tomorrow."

His clothes fitted me nicely. I helped him with breakfast, eggs and rolls and coffee, whipped up over an electric grill on his bureau. "Now what?" he asked.

"Go to the Spoorn's, and meet me for lunch at noon. We'll powwow some more. Don't let on about this double business. Maybe it's an ace in the hole for us."

"Right." We decided on a cafeteria not far from the shop, and he went away.

Even then my chief reaction was of fascinated wonder that I had stumbled upon so complete a twin to myself. I spent the morning in clothing stores of the Twenties, getting a gray suit and some shirts and ties of different style from Andy's. This was deliberate. I even considered growing a mustache, or wearing spectacles, but the clothes were enough of a difference.

I WAS at the cafeteria a quarter of an hour before noon, and so was Andy. He had begged off early, saying he must buy some cough medicine. I put plenty of lunch on my tray, but Andy's appetite, at least, was different from mine. He led the way to a semi-remote table, gulped at his coffee, and began lecturing me.

"It's a little more disgusting than I thought possible," he began. "That sounds funny, from an old frontline infantryman who knows what the score is on disgust; but I mean it. They don't want me to sell books—they don't sell books themselves, except as a front—"

"They?" I interrupted. "Who are they? Are there two Spoorns, too?"

"Lots of 'em," said Andy. "He's one of a bunch of wrong guys, Stonewall. All wrong guys. You and I read about witches and devil-worshippers for fun and think it's fiction. They *are* witches and devil-worshippers, and think—and know—it's real."

"Then they're mad," I began, but he waved me quiet.

"With rotten method in their madness. Think off all the dirt you've ever heard or suspected about black magic. Nasty ceremonies, baby sacrifices, death spells, cowardly sneaky organizations to fight anything that's normal and pleasant and friendly. Think of it as actual, or at least studied and done by all sorts of little cabals and societies everywhere—thick in New York, because this is a big town and full of funny doings. And think of a sort of library-meet-

ing place for those people, or anyway their leaders, their miserable wry-faced, wry-minded leaders. Did you notice the bookshelves without any lights at the back of the room?"

"I wondered how anybody could even read the titles there," I remembered, watching Andy closely and nervously.

"Don't look at me as if you wanted to call for a straitjacket. Some people can read the titles, because they have special eyes. Or perhaps they know the books by touch or instinct—anyway, the Spoorn has nothing there that he offers for sale. Odd customers look only at the stuff on the tables and counters. The Spoorn's real business is with people who come in and borrow those dark-shelf volumes."

"Get to some sort of starting point," I begged him, and he drew a long breath.

"You saw those instructions, and didn't understand them. I read them a bit more clearly, because they referred to a wish to use my studies in Iceland, and because they were building up to some kind of oath of secrecy." Again Andy drew a long breath, as if to clean some sort of bad air out of his lungs. "When I arrived, this morning, the Spoorn was waiting for me. He had me into that little cubby of an office, and gave me a book to translate. It was all in handwritten letters of a funny jagged sort —runes, I think, and Icelandic. When I said I couldn't read Icelandic, only talk a little, he wasn't at all disappointed. He said I'd pick it up soon, and left me alone. He was right. After I was alone a while, that writing began to make sense."

"What was it about?"

"Magic. Power. All the wrong sort. There were spells to bring up devils—I stopped reading one in the middle, because I had a sense of something getting ready to crawl out from under the table. There was quite an essay, sneering because the investigators of the Moira-Blockula witchcraft seem to have missed the boat on its real leaders. And a lot of instruction for novices coming into the outfit. That's when I paused and shut it up and told the Spoorn I wasn't having any."

"What was he doing while you were letting those runes seep into you?" I asked.

"He waited on a customer or two, and greeted several of his ugly friends. Twice men came in with what I think was food—lots of food—and he unlocked a door and let them go downstairs to deliver it—somewhere." Andy licked his lips. I do that, too, when my lips are dry from excitement. "But when I said I'd had enough of his runic book, he turned on one of those hard smiles of his. He said it was too late. By reading the book at all, I was practically past my first initiation into a very unorthodox but very interesting fellowship. Those were his words. He tried to get me to go downstairs through that door he keeps locked. Finally I pretended to agree, but asked for a chance to go to lunch first. He made me swear, by some names I never heard, that I'd tell nobody about it except myself."

Andy told me the names, and it will shortly be apparent in this account why I do not mention them here.

"You're breaking your oath," I reminded him. "You're telling me—but, when it comes to that, I'm really yourself, or your other face and mind. Look here, you're upset. Let me go back there instead of you."

"Neither of us will go back," he said firmly.

"We can't let it sweat us out, Andy," I argued. "We're onto something that needs to be investigated. We're the guys to do it. Go back to the room and I'll sit in for you this afternoon."

But he shook his head. "We're dressed differently now. He'd wonder about that. I'll go myself—you're right about finding out more things. Meet me at the corner after quitting time."

And I let him arrange it that way. I went back to West Nineteenth Street, washed my face—it was hot and feverish—and subwayed up to the public library to track down something I seemed to remember.

I found it in Reginald Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft,* Book Eight, Chapter Fifteen. I copied it down in modern spelling: ". . . and they have so frayd us with bull-beggers, spirits, witches, urchins, elves, hags, fairies, satyrs, Pans, fauns, sylvans, Kitt-with-the-candlestock, tritons, centaurs, dwarfs, giants, imps, calcars, conjurers,

nymphs, changelings, incubus, Robin Goodfellow, the spoorn, the man-in-the-oak, the hellwain, the fire-drake, the puckle, Tom Thumb, Hobgoblin, Tom Tumbler, Boneless and such other bugbears, that we are afraid of our own shadows, insomuch that some never fear the devil but on a dark night; and then a polled sheep is a perilous beast, and many times is taken for our father's soul, specially in a churchyard, where a right hardy man heretofore durst not to have passed by night but his hair would stand upright."

That catalogue of frightening monsters held its riddles. The man-in-the-oak must be a forest devil, the hellwain perhaps Hellequin—harlequin?—but what were Kitt-with-the-candlestick, Boneless, and the spoorn?

I had used to wonder about that last. Now it was a name I knew.

Going back to the room, I smoked too much and made myself some coffee. The landlady came and knocked and said there was a visitor. "John Thunstone, he says his name is," she told me.

I knew no John Thunstone, but Andy might. "Tell him to come in," I said, and he entered, stooping to get through the door. He was inches over six feet, and unusually broad even for that height. All his clothes must have been made specially for him, suit, shoes, shirts. He had a face like a rectangle, with a broad brow and jaw, a small dark mustache and black hair combed close to his great cranium.

"Are you Jackson Warren?" he asked, and when I nodded his big face lighted up with relief.

"Thank heaven for whatever made you fail to go back to work at that bookshop this afternoon," said John Thunstone. "Because if you had, I might never have brought you out again."

IV

I SAT down hard, without the thought or manners left to invite him to take a chair. He stepped closer and towered over me like some statue of heroic size.

"You know a little something, I think, about demonology," he began. "Enough to appreciate what I mean when I tell you that the Spoorn and his shop are a front for a rankly wicked group of—"

"I know a little about it," I broke in, not too politely. "But how do you know? What makes it your business?"

He smiled down, as from calm summits. "So many people think I meddle where I have no right or motive," he said. "Let me say at once that such people are the sort whose good will I reject, and whose destruction I practise. I found out about you the same place that Rowley Thorne found out, from someone in Iceland. That someone said you were being referred to Thorne in New York, and that Thorne would try to use you in a way you'll find decidedly unsatisfactory—"

"Mr. Thunstone," I interrupted again, "You've got the wrong Jackson Warren. You're talking about my double, Andy."

I was probably foolish to trust him on his own showing, but I told him everything, as quickly and simply as I could. He listened calmly and politely, and without the slightest indication that he found the story unusual.

"I like what your friend—Andy, as you call him—said about this being no coincidence. Only deliberate and cosmic plan could make you duplicates in all things, and bring you together at this time and in this situation. I have an explanation—but no time to make you understand it. Later, perhaps. We have to get your friend Andy out of a dangerous mess."

"What kind of mess?" I demanded.

He picked up his gray felt hat, a hat big enough for even Daniel Webster's spacious cranium. "Come along, and I'll talk as we get a taxi."

He did, while we rode to Tenth Street. He said that Rowley Thorne was one of many who patronized the Spoorn's back shelves full of evil books, and that the shop was a sort of rendezvous for diabolists and psychic scoundrels, just as a certain corner drugstore draws the adolescents of a neighborhood, or a certain bar is a hangout for prize fighters and their managers, or a certain restaurant gets the artistic trade to the exclusion of most others. It was not only an unofficial reference library for them, but a place to receive mail—lots of them, said Thunstone, did not dare stay at

one address for any length of time for a variety of reasons. And there was something going on in the basement that he, Thunstone, was trying to learn about.

"Andy told me something at lunch," said I. "About food being sent down through a locked door."

"Food?" echoed Thunstone. "In other words, not only is there activity in that basement—there's a set of living quarters. Here's where we get out."

It was not at the Spoorn shop, nor even on the same street, but around the corner. Thunstone led me to a door flush with the sidewalk, a little stationery stand. The proprietor greeted him with a smile of warm welcome that used the mouth, the eyes, the whole face. Thunstone led me to a telephone booth with a sign that said "out of order," and pulled open the door. He squeezed his big body in—and through. His hand came back to twitch me by the sleeve, and I followed him. As I entered, I saw that the back of the booth was hinged, and when it swung before us we went into a chamber beyond.

"My busybody activities have gathered me friends and helpers like the fellow out there," Thunstone told me. "People give me information and shelter and weapons and—no time to tell all about that. I've spent months arranging to slip quietly along here," and he led me through another door to a room still rearward, "to a point directly behind the bookshop."

This last room we entered was completely bare of furniture, rug or pictures. Its walls were drab, covered with that stuff they call—very accurately—distemper. The one window was covered with a blind, and a single naked light bulb hung from a cord overhead. Thunstone moved silently as a foraging cat for all his size, coming to the wall and placing his ear against it. At his gesture, I did the same.

AT ONCE I heard something, muffled at first, then separating itself into sounds, words. They were words in a language I did not know—or did I not? The sense, at least, of what was being said behind the wall was clarifying in my ear and my brain. It was like a prayer: *Saya Salna Elenke Serna, give us the wisdom which only we can endure, having strength by humility. . . .*

Thunstone had caught my shoulder, pulling me away from the wall and through the door into the first hidden room. There were chairs, and he pushed me into one, then sat down himself. "How many were reciting?" he asked.

"Several. More than one, anyhow."

"It's the school," he muttered, to himself more than to me. "And the poor kid's being matriculated—" He paused, looking at me. "Tell me something again. I think you said that Andy spoke of giving a promise of some sort to the Spoorn."

"That's right," I remembered. "He pretended to agree to a suggestion—"

"Pretended—and put himself in danger!" exploded Thunstone. "The very nursery tales are full of things like that. A chance word or action, not meant at all, becomes binding when the dark powers are interested. Willing or not, deliberate or not, your friend Andy has made an act of allegiance. The book he began to read was another point. A glance at it showed him it was downright evil. He should have walked out then and there, and all they could have done was try to kill him."

"But you spoke of a school," I said unsteadily. "You think Andy's being put into that."

"I do, and I believe it will change him completely. Up to now he's been normal, decent, sane. But three years underground—"

I whistled sharply. "Three years! In that basement?"

"Others have done that course of study. I knew one, who died wretchedly and whose only hope was that he could repent enough before death. I'm sure of the school now, the Icelandic tie was the final bit of evidence."

He told me a story, out of the history of Iceland. It can be read in almost any library of the United States, for he quoted largely from the sagas of Eric the Red and Leif the Lucky. The beginning was with Eric's voyage to Greenland, after he had been exiled for murder from Norway, then from Iceland, and gave to his bleak new home what he thought was a good name to attract colonists.

To Greenland and Eric's colony came the sorceress Thorbiorg at the invitation of the pagan settlers, to prophesy for them the fate of their venture. Even her description descends to modern time—a dark blue cloak, a hood made of the fleece of a black lamb, a necklace of glass beads, a jewel-headed staff, a leather pouch full of charms. On her second evening she asked for help, someone to sing the chants of power, and nowhere in that colony were there sibyls or warlocks.

Gudrid, a girl of the colonists, said: "Although I am neither skilled in the black art nor a sibyl, yet my foster-mother, Halldis, taught me in Iceland that spell-song, which she called Warlocks."

"Then are thou wise in season," applauded Thorbiorg, but the girl demurred. "This is an incantation and ceremony of such a kind that I do not mean to lend it any aid," she said, "for that I am a Christian woman."

BUT her friends and relatives pleaded with her until she consented to help, and Gudrid sang, "so sweet and well" that the sorceress thanked her for the song. "She has indeed lured many spirits hither," said Thorbiorg, "those who were wont to forsake us hitherto and refuse to submit themselves to us." She prophesied glibly about an end to famine and disease; but the following year, the winter after Leif's first voyage to shores which must have been Canadian, there was an epidemic in Greenland that had horrible aspects. One woman who died and was buried rose and walked in the night, so that only a spell involving the holding of an axe before her could make her return to her grave. Thorstein, son of Eric, also returned after death to say that Christian burial rites must be practised for all funerals to prevent such phenomena.

Thunstone paused in his story, looking at me significantly. "You have, then, the story of Gudrid—a sane and honest and well brought up young person—being prevailed upon to perform a rite of black magic she had learned in Iceland and which she did not particularly believe. After that came supernatural terror. What's the thought in your mind?"

"My friend Andy," I said at once. "He was sane and normal, and in Iceland he learned—"

"Exactly," broke in Thunstone, slapping his great hand down on his knee. "Using him in what they're doing will be a triumph to them. A thousand years ago in Greenland, magic was used to start a whole series of ugly events."

"Including the discovery of America before Columbus?" I put in. "Was that ugly?"

"It was a failure, at least. They went to Vineland the Good only a few times, and lost touch. America was found for us by Columbus and his Spaniards, who while sailing called on the saints, not the devils, with almost every breath. But to get back to the sagas and their accounts—"

He told about the voyage to Vineland of Karlsefni, of how the pagan prayers of Thorhall brought a whale to the hungry voyagers and of how eating that whale made them sick. There was fighting with the swarthy, broad-faced natives the Norse called Skraelings, who had a weapon that sounded like a bomb—a black ball that exploded loudly when flung. The women of the voyage waited behind a fence while their men fought. Among them was Gudrid, to whom suddenly appeared a woman like herself, with chestnut hair, pale white skin and large eyes.

"What is thy name?" demanded the apparition.

"My name is Gudrid," replied the girl who once had allowed herself to be argued into singing of black magic. "But what is thine?"

"Gudrid!" cried the strange being, and vanished with a crash like that of the Skraelings' strange weapon.

When Thunstone had made an end, I did not wait to be asked a question.

"Gudrid met her doppelganger," I said. "Someone like her in appearance, even in name. It's the story of Andy and myself."

"Exactly," said Thunstone again. "Well, after the battle the explorers sailed back to Greenland. A Christian bishop sailed for Vineland later, and never was heard of again. The Greenland colony itself vanished. But Icelandic magic remained, and

now it makes its return to the shores of this continent once called Vineland."

"You make it sound baleful," I ventured.

"And so it is. A bad beginning's been made, and your friend Andy is involved without knowing why or how. You and I are going to get him out of it, I say, and at once."

V

I KEPT wondering about the school. Three years underground—it seemed incredible, impossible. Thunstone must have read my thoughts, as a surprising number of clever people can.

"The institution's old enough in its beginnings," he said. "I can give you even a reference in medieval history—the career of Saemund inn Frodi Sigfusson, Iceland's great teacher and poet of the eleventh and twelfth centuries."

"All that I can remember," I said, "is that he's credited with writing the Elder Edda."

"He spent years of study on the continent," Thunstone told me. "His friends lost track of him, and a very good priest—St. Jon Ogmundson, later bishop of Holar—went to find him. Saemund bobbed up, but so changed that St. Jon barely recognized him. He even had a new name—Kol. You change your name when you go diabolist, you know."

"I know," I nodded, for I had read about that in Summers, Wickwar, and Margaret Alice Murray.

"He'd attended the *Svartaskoli,* the Black College," went on Thunstone. "It took prayers and holy water and other things—St. Jon's white magic—to restore him. And after that, a nip-and-tuck flight from those who wanted to hang onto him. But he got away, was an ornament in the crown of Iceland's cultural history, and by his escape we know about that school, its terrors, and the way to fight it. Well, the *Svartaskoli's* right on the other side of the wall from us now, or a branch of it, anyway. Are you game for—"

He broke off, and we both stared. Something was happening on that drab wall.

You can see such things over a period of days or weeks, where damp and decay darkens and cracks and disintegrates a stretch of plaster. But this happened fast, in moments.

All at once a great patch went rotten and porous, and through it seeped a cloud of something.

"Freeze, Stonewall," muttered Thunstone, not even his lips twitching. "Don't move a muscle until I speak. Then—"

I made a statue of myself. My eyes stung with a desire to blink. I fixed them on the vapor. It was dark, oily-seeming, here and there clotting as if with particles of moisture coming together. It made a figure, vaguely human, the half-man-form that is the most terrifying thing of which imagination is capable.

We'd been detected from beyond the wall, then. It had been too much to hope that we would go unguessed. And this that had been sent—it must have power to destroy, or it would not have come. Something else, more terrible, would—

My dry throat convulsed in spite of me. I had kept silent in my time, within touch almost of scouting enemy infantry, but I could not now. I made a noise, a sort of choking rattle. And the cloud turned to me, turned its lumpy half-shaped headpiece as if it had a face and eyes and could see. Its arms, like two streamers of oil smoke, lifted, then paused. It was afraid, or surprised. It shrank back toward the wall from which it had cleared.

"No!" yelled Thunstone.

I never saw a big man move so fast, not even the ex-wrestler who'd taught us his rough-and-tumble school of fighting and killing with bare hands. Thunstone was down on hands and knees, between the thing and the wall, and one fist shot out with a lump of something pale red. He scraped the floor—a mark—he was drawing with chalk, seemingly speeded up like the decay of the wall. He slashed here, angled off there, and was back. The vapory thing turned back to him, and he scrambled off around it. A big rough star of chalk-lines showed all around the bottom of it, where real figures would have feet.

"Recite," said Thunstone. "The beginning of the Gospel of St. John. Do you know it?"

I did know it, or something put th

words into my mind and my mouth. "In the Beginning was the Word," I stammered, "and the Word was—"

BETWEEN the points of the star, Thunstone was dashing in signs, or perhaps letters in an alphabet I had never seen. As I quoted the Gospel, the thing in the center of his diagram quivered and writhed, but did not move. It was rooted, I thought, to the worn floor-boards. Rising to one knee, Thunstone fairly whirled a circle outside his star and the signs. He stood up, panting.

"It's in prison," he told me exultantly. "See what I've done? Instead of drawing the pentacle and circle around us, I got it around it—and there's no passing that set of lines and figures."

"I'm afraid I almost bungled it," I managed to say, and my voice and my knees trembled.

"You didn't mean to, and neither of us knew that the best way to surprise the thing was to rivet its attention on you," Thunstone assured me. "You're the image of Andy, who's the last human being it expected to find here. Its dark mind, or what it uses for a mind, was taken aback, and gave me my chance. Look!"

The thing wavered here and there, but shrank back from the chalk lines, as from electric wires. I half understood that it was confined as stone walls and iron bars could never confine such a thing. "What is it?" I became bold enough to ask. "Where did it come from?"

"From a bottle, in which nasty things were mixed. Men like those we're fighting can make their own crude ghosts and demons. We'll stop that, along with some other things."

Thunstone pointed to the rotted space of plaster. "It would have retreated through there, and warned them in ways they'd understand. Since it's helpless here, we can use its passageway. Best defense is a good offense."

"Get there first with the most," I glibly quoted Bedford Forrest, and Thunstone's great hand clapped my shoulder in approval.

"Pay attention," he bade me solemnly. "We can get in there easily now; but we'll find ourselves among things you can't imagine, and I can't explain. I speak of a school in a cellar—it won't be a cellar. Once for a few moments I slid into the other world they make, and none of its mysteries are pleasant to solve. But remember this, Stonewall; *the only way they can defeat and destroy you is to awe you into helplessness.*"

"We're both quoting a lot," I replied, as solemnly as he. "I'll give you something from John Bunyan: 'For here lay the excellent wisdom of him that built Mansoul, that the walls could never be broken down nor hurt, by the most mighty adverse potentates, unless the townsmen gave consent thereto.' "

"*The Holy War,*" Thunstone identified the passage, and clapped my shoulder again. "And it's true. The most evil spirit is powerless unless you give it power over you. A werewolf shifts his shape back to human if you speak to him boldly, if you even look levelly. A vampire runs from the simple sign of the cross, made with two fingers. The devil's afraid of music, and the Angry Gods died, the whole leash of them, from the negative cause of having no more worshippers. Will you follow my lead? Then come on."

He stepped forward and with a sweep of his hand as at a curtain struck away the decayed plaster. It fell to dust, and if there had been lath or siding beyond, that vanished too. He stooped, strode through, and struck hard at something beyond. As I followed him in, I saw his target lying on the floor in a shadowed little corridor—a man almost as tall as Thunstone, but scrawny and with evil lines in his stunned face. The man wore a star-spangled garment like a gown, and from his untidy head had fallen a cone-shaped cap, like the archaic costuming of a sorcerer.

"One of the least important of our opposition," said Thunstone quietly. "He was posted here just to guide that vapor-creature in and out." His left palm massaged his right fist. "When I hit men like that, they don't get up for an hour. It should be enough."

Down the corridor was a single door, marked with a looped cross like an Egyptian sign. Thunstone turned the knob, and the door swung inward with a whispery

creak. He went down stairs into darkness as black as a pond of ink, and I went with him

VI

NO, IT WAS no cellar. If you choose not to believe me, probably you are going to be easier in mind. We came down the steps, and I am sure that if I had turned to look for them they would have vanished.

I had done what I once learned to do in night operations, closed my eyes tightly to dilate the pupils, and so when I opened them I was able at once to see a little. Every moment I saw a little plainer, and quite plainly enough to suit me.

We were in the open somewhere. The strange ground underfoot was flat, and the flatness extended far. There may have been hills or cliffs in the distance. Here and there grew what I shall call trees, and lower brushy clumps, without a leaf on them. I thought some of them quivered, thought it might have been a conscious blind writhing, like the writhing of half-sleeping snakes.

In the empty dark overhead, what passed here for sky, rode a round moon, and it was the color of blood, as if foretold of the moon at the world's destruction in the Book of Revelations. It gave only the faintest bloody light, outlining nearby banks of dark, filthy clouds. I chose not to believe that those clouds were gigantic vapor-forms of life, bigger and grosser and more grotesque than the man-size entity Thunstone had trapped in his magic chalk-lines.

Thunstone, a pace ahead of me, snapped his fingers for attention, like a bush-guide in the Pacific islands. I followed his intent gaze. Something came toward us.

It seemed as large and strangely shaped as a camel, and it gleamed tallow-pale as with its own inner radiance. After a moment I had the impression of a man on a horse, approaching at a shambling trot. But though the rider might once have been a man, he rode no horse thing.

They were bones, skeleton things, but not clear-cut to the bony anatomy we know in medical schools or museums. Everything was gross, strangely joined, lacking here and extra there. The beast had earlike juttings to either side of its skull, and below its eye-caverns sprouted a horn, set too far forward to make it a unicorn. It wore a bridle of sorts, but the rider seemed not to guide it. He sat upright in his saddle, as awkwardly arrogant as Don Quixote who had gone over to Satan. I thought he wore a blunt-peaked helmet, then judged that this was part of his bald, polished skull. From the chin-point below the lipless teeth hung a beard, long, lank and white as thistledown. Over his shoulders was draped a cloak of the moon's same bloody red, his left arm wore a shield with a squat, ugly figure for blazonry, and in his right hand he held aloft a spear. All this I saw as he came toward us, with an unhurried noiseless intensity of movement. At perhaps thirty yards he dropped the lance in rest. Its head, that seemed of some rough white stone like the point of a stalactite, aimed full at Thunstone.

If Thunstone had not stood so confidently immovable, I myself might have turned and run, and I cannot think where I could have run to safely. As it was, I was able to draw from my companion some part of the mighty assurance that matched his mighty frame, and I, too, stood fast. The horrid rider on the horrid beast sped at him, upon him—and Thunstone had shot up his massive forearm, striking aside the lance, and was in close with both big hands clutching at the bridle.

HE STOPPED the creature, forcing its bumpy, horned skullhead up and back until its fore hoofs rose and pawed. The two lipless rows of teeth on the rider's bearded face shot apart, and out came a reedy cry. I ran in on the left side, took a glancing blow from the shield that filled the upper space around the red moon with pale swimming stars; but then I got my arms around a bony leg in rattly chain mail, and with a heave in and up I tumbled him out of his saddle. As he fell, and I threw myself upon him, I saw that Thunstone had somehow twisted the steed's head and neck so that it fell uncouthly on its side, with a sickening clatter of bare bones.

Because I was beyond amazement, I had no sense of wonder at the burst of strength

by which Thunstone achieved that overthrow.

My own capture had dropped his lance, but he flogged at me with the shield bound to his arm. I got my knee on his mailed chest and worked a hand through that white beard—it was coarse and dry as dried grass—to find his throat. There was no throat, only a struggling column of bones joined together, like a spinal column. My fingers recoiled of their own sickness, closed in the beard, and it twitched off of his skeleton jaw, like something gummed on. I would not allow fear, but disgust shook me and made me faint. Somehow I stayed on top, pinning the thrashing body until Thunstone sprang to my side and knelt.

"Thunstone!" wheezed the lipless, fleshless mouth. It needed no lips to articulate that name. "You—"

"You know me," said Thunstone, with a quiet triumph that somehow made everything all right. "I know you, then. Who are you—who *were* you?"

The misshapen skull shifted and turned its sockets up to me. Deep in their shadows was the hint of real, glaring eyes. The jaw stirred again.

"Stonewall. . . ."

"You know me, too!" I gasped.

"Call him by name," Thunstone bade me quickly.

Only one person beside Thunstone himself had ever called me Stonewall, and I spoke at once.

"Andy," I stammered. "Andrew Jackson Warren. What have they done to you?"

The form I held shuddered and went slack. I heard hoarse breathing, like a dying man struggling for a hold on life as it left him. A hand rose, not to strike or push, but to grope at me, appealing and pitiful. My eyes were sprung all full of tears, and I scrubbed them clear on my sleeve. Then I could see.

It was Andy.

He was trying to sit up, and I crept clear of him. He stared blankly at me and at Thunstone, his wide mouth open in his pallid face. He dabbed at his disordered hair. The red cloak fell from his shoulders. He looked down at the shield he wore, and wriggled it off of his arm.

"Ghaa!" He cleared his throat, and spat on the ground, near some things like faintly phosphorescent toadstools. "What goes on here?"

THUNSTONE hooked a big fork of a hand under Andy's armpit and set him on his feet. "Of course they'd send him," he said to me. "Send him, changed like this, to blood himself into their horde by killing his rescuers. Try not to puzzle it out too much, Stonewall. This place where we've come isn't logical. It's proof of more dimensions than three, and of more senses than five."

I was thinking of what Thunstone had said about the *Svartaskoli,* and of the years spent there. They had had Andy brief hours, and had changed him to—Thunstone read my thoughts again.

"It wasn't real," he told me. "The old scholars called such thing a glamor, and they didn't mean Hollywood glamor. Things can seem otherwise than they are, to sight and touch. You know about werewolves, and the 'appearances' in Salem long ago—disguise by sorcery, not by greasepaint or theatrical costume." He smiled down at Andy. "You don't know how much good this has done all hands. Their logic sent you against us, for they sensed our attack; and put you back into the right ranks."

I strolled over to where Thunstone had hurled that riding creature. It lay in a heap of mouldering bones, like some ancient fossils dug up by scientists. I stooped to touch them, and thought better of it.

"What else is standing in the way here?" Thunstone inquired gently of Andy.

Andy shook his head again, slowly, as if to get sense back into it. "Nothing that I know of. Everything's been blurred, like a dream. But they pointed me out here alone. Their orders were definite, anyway, and a moment ago I was set to carry them out."

"Remember Saemund, the Icelandic scholar?" Thunstone reminded me. "St. Jon called him his own name, and he was himself again. We've done just that. Now, Andy, tell us what you know, while it's still even faintly in your mind. Then I want you to go on and forget it."

Andy told, haltingly, as if it was a story

out of his babyhood. The Spoorn and one or two others had given him a book to read, in characters that were provocatively mysterious but which clarified as if his effort to decipher them made them more easy. And he grew foggier and dreamier, and gathered ideas that seemed at the time like brilliant truths, worth following to death and beyond. Finally they told him to come downstairs, and he did so very willingly, into the country we now saw. A long trail led to a squat tower, blacker than soot, and inside was his school.

"I was to stay there and learn to be worthy of their fellowship," Andy told us. "Those were the Spoorn's words. It was so black inside, charcoal would have made a white mark on the wall. But the books—they had letters of cold fire, like rotten wood—"

"Never mind telling us what they said," interrupted Thunstone. "How many were with you?"

"Two others, I think. We weren't to speak to each other. Only study. Once a hand came from somewhere, all shaggy with gray hair, and put down food. I didn't eat it."

"Probably a good thing," I ventured. "Three students—not much of a university, Mr. Thunstone."

"Harvard was no larger in the beginning," replied Thunstone sententiously. "One more question, Andy. Which way is this tower where you entered the primer class of the *Svartaskoli?*"

Andy pointed silently into the dark distance behind him.

"Come," said Thunstone, and stepped out lightly and swiftly as the biggest of all cats.

We followed side by side, Andy and I. It seemed a long, gloomy way, though there was a marked trail underfoot which our feet easily groped upon. Once or twice we passed through ugly thickets, which I fancied were alive and menacing, like ranks of tentacled animals. There was a way up a steep slope, and once we all three scrambled on all fours over a wall of close-set stone that was warm as if from recent fires upon it. I felt a damp wind, and had the sense of great space everywhere.

Thunstone stopped at last, under a mighty overhanging boulder tufted with lichenlike growths, and snapped his fingers as before. We saw what he saw.

The red moon had dropped toward a horizon, not far away. Against it was silhouetted a squat, square tower, black, to quote Andy, as soot. The damp wind blew from that direction.

VII

THE purpose of all military training is success in battle, and there are a myriad sciences toward that success. If you have been an infantryman, you have learned how best to approach a hostile building.

Thunstone must have been an officer once, with plenty of experience in the front lines. He knew and did everything admirably.

He even knew the silent motions, nudges and signs by which to give us orders. We crept, belly to the gritty soil, on a long dim circle to the right that brought us around and in toward the tower. I wished for a weapon—an M-1, a carbine or a BAR—on that approach crawl. Then I reflected that Thunstone had a master plan that involved no rifles.

He went ahead, leading us to the right, then in. We kept the tower between us and the red light of the sinking moon. It showed us two scrubby trees like gnarled talons spread upward, and then it showed us moving figures. These were human, or probably human. Two of them stood beside the tower, by the door, as if conversing. The other, a hunched thing with skinny long arms that hung almost to the ankle, stood to one side, as if guarding something that lay on the ground. At last one of the two moved to this hunchback, with a gesture and apparently a word. I guessed that this speaker was the Spoorn, for he showed small and slim, with a suggestion of elegance in position and movement. The long arms of the hunchback scooped up something, a tray, and waddled toward the tower and in.

"The food," whispered Andy, faint as thought, in my ear.

I remembered what he said about the shaggy gray hair on the hands of the foodbringer, and hoped that if I came into close

conflict with that thing I could make a quick job of it.

The two who had spoken had a final word together, and one of them started in our direction, along the trail we had followed.

Thunstone scrambled back to us, and in less than six words gave us our orders. I lay flat on the trail. Thunstone, a few feet ahead, made his big body small as possible behind one of those filthy-seeming bushes. Andy, on the opposite side of the trail, found a hummock behind which he took cover like the good soldier he had learned to be. The man came briskly along, whistling something minor. He was not the Spoorn, too squat and ruggedly built.

He did not see me until he was almost upon me, and I sprang to my feet. Of course he stopped dead. I think he would have yelled, but Thunstone and Andy were upon him from both sides. I saw the darting chop of Thunstone's big hand, edge in, to the fellow's throat. That bruising wallop on the adam's apple quiets anybody. A moment later Andy had pinned the enemy's elbows from behind, and Thunstone hit him four or five times, to head and body. I could hear Thunstone grunt with the effort. When Andy let go, the man dropped as limply as an old rag.

We clustered around him. Thunstone's face was close enough to me to let me see his grin of savage relish.

"I know him," he whispered. "A fool, of course—nearly everyone in business like this is a fool or a tricked victim, as they planned to make Andy."

He gave the forward sign, and we headed towerward again.

THE one remaining outside was the Spoorn, all right. He was humming the same song that our late objective had whistled. Thunstone, still leading, gained cover within twenty yards of him. Then he stood up and walked swiftly forward. Andy and I did likewise, but kept behind.

"Hello, Thunstone," said the Spoorn, with an affectation of quiet cordiality. "We knew you'd be in this. You've come awfully close."

"I like to get close to my work," replied Thunstone.

"I see," and the Spoorn's head-silhouette nodded. "You've come so far by brash, brainless audacity, and probably a few wallops with those big fists. You think you can crush me like a fly? But I'm no fly, Thunstone."

"A spider," amended Thunstone.

The Spoorn nodded again. "I accept the compliment. A spider. A blood-drinking spider. I'll drink your blood, Thunstone—figuratively. And it'll be drunk literally, and your flesh eaten, by some of the native fauna of this little pleasure ground. All I have to do is whistle a note through my fingers and they'll be here."

"I'm safe for the moment, then," said Thunstone, and edged around the Spoorn. "You won't dare whistle them up unless you can get inside to safety, or they'll eat you, too. As long as I stay between you and the door—"

"I've always admired your ability to find things out," said the Spoorn. "You ought to be in with us. Really you ought. You'd have fun here."

"This place," said Thunstone, "is a dream. It's here because an attitude of mind creates it. I don't live in dreams, not this kind of dream, anyway. We're going to wake up the dreamer."

"Your friends are still shy," put in the Spoorn, and laughed quietly. He had a master flair for restrained drama.

"If you insist on meeting them—" Thunstone beckoned us. "Come on, gentlemen."

We marched quickly in, shoulder to shoulder, and the Spoorn turned to gaze at us. At the same moment Thunstone struck a match.

I saw the Spoorn's mouth open, his eyes goggle. In the light of the match Thunstone held, his face turned whiter than wax. He tried to say something, and achieved only a bat-squeak. Then:

"Not two!" he wailed. *"Not two!"*

Maybe he fainted. Thunstone caught him and picked him up.

"Come on," he said, and rushed at the tower. It seemed made of earth, as if whittled out of a great natural mound of claylike consistency. Even the door was like that, perhaps its hinges. Thunstone threw the Spoorn like a javelin, and the door broke all to pieces.

We were inside, lighting more matches. There was a little entry, and in one corner wriggled and cowered the hunchback, holding the tray in front of him. He wore no clothes that I could see, only a thick coat of grizzly hair.

"He's blind," said Thunstone. "Look, inside this place is wood—old wood, older than the first planks ever sawn in America."

He touched a match to the wall, and it kindled like candlegrease. Someone yelled farther inside—one of Andy's ex-schoolfellows, I suppose. We backed out into the open, and it wasn't the open.

It was a cellar now, a cellar such as you find under many old houses in New York. The walls were of crumbly cement, there was a mass of trash everywhere. From the direction we had just quitted, and to which we now turned, beat a wall of flame, healthy red flame as in a monstrous fireplace.

"The stairs," said Andy, and pointed. "We can get out."

"Wait." I panted, and bent to look at something lying among the trash. "It's the Spoorn. Here, too. Help me lift him."

Thunstone's hand closed on my shoulder and plucked me up and away.

"But he'll die in that fire!" I protested.

"Certainly he will!" Thunstone snapped. "Fire in this world, and fire in the next—that's the judgment on him!"

He rushed me up the stairs, and Andy followed. We were in the corridor we had once seen, and Thunstone poked me through the hole in the wall into the room behind the stationery stand.

VIII

ON THE floor of the room showed a rough figure in chalk, a star, some letters and a circle. There was nothing, not the slightest suggestion of anything, in its center. Thunstone scuffed the lines away with his heel.

"So much for the Spoorn's magic," he said. "Do you understand what happened?"

"I do," I said. "A little. You said down there that the place was a dream place."

"Dreamed up—in the strictest sense of the word," nodded Thunstone. "Normally, we have a bookshop and a cellar beneath it. Some individuals with warped impulses and a decidedly unusual pattern of thought get together and read things and make complicated ceremony-gestures. The cellar becomes a subterranean country, full of abnormal conditions and objects. Frightening, unspeakable—but if it's that easy to create, it's that easy to destroy."

"The Spoorn made it?" ventured Andy, and Thunstone nodded again.

"He considered himself master of all magic. What paralyzed his mind was the sudden sight of you two. Somewhere along the line you decided that your duplication wasn't coincidence, but a depart of a deliberate plan. You were right."

"Why couldn't he stand the two of us?" asked Andy.

"Because he knew he had lost power over the one by the freedom of the other. You were aware, too, of the belief that doubles are a curse. They were this time—a curse on the Spoorn. He had not expected any such opposition to him. He wanted all the supernatural on his side. When you popped in on him together—"

"He folded up," finished Andy. "Quit. Blacked out."

"And everything he had charmed up for himself was ruined. We had a few seconds to set the fire, which always makes everything clean."

Outside we heard voices, commotion and gongs. Thunstone led us out through the shop into the street.

"Fire engines?" he inquired mildly of an excited fat housewife.

"The bookshop around the corner," she chattered. "It's blazing like tinder. Firemen say they can save the shops around it, but that nice man that runs the place—Mr. Spoorn—he and his friends are caught inside—they'll never be got out—"

"I see." Thunstone strolled away, and we with him.

"It's almost dinner time," he told us, "and I've an invitation. Won't you two come along? Several others will be there. A little Frenchman named de Grandin, who will want to hear all about this. And," he smiled, "my host has daughters. Two strikingly beautiful girls. They're identical twins—can't be told apart."

"Let's go!" cried Andy.

The Bogy Man Will Get You

By ROBERT BLOCH

He was so very different *from other men!*

THE first time Nancy met Philip Ames he didn't even *notice* her. Of course, you really couldn't blame him. After all, she was only fifteen —just a *kid*. But that was last year, and this time it was different.

Nancy's folks went back to Beaver Lake for the summer in June, and she could

Heading by HUMISTON

hardly wait to find out if Philip Ames still had his cottage down the road.

Hedy Schuster said he was up, all right. She said Mr. Ames lived at the cottage *all* year. Everybody knows how cold it gets at the lake in winter—practically out of this world. But Hedy Schuster knew, because she talked to Mr. Prentiss down at the store and he said so. That Prentiss was like an old woman, he had his nose in everybody's business.

The first chance she got, Nancy took a walk up the road past Philip Ames' cottage. The door was closed and there were curtains on the windows, so she didn't see anything. But then, Mr. Ames wasn't around much in the daytime. Practically a hermit. Hedy Schuster said it was because he was writing his Ph.D. thesis for the university. He only shined around at night.

"But after all, that's the best time, isn't it?" Hedy Schuster said. It was just like her to make such a snotty remark to Nancy, knowing how it would burn her up.

Not that Nancy ever tried to hide the way she felt about Philip Ames. Why *should* she? After *all*, she was sixteen, she had a mind of her own. And Philip Ames was really *something*.

Nancy always liked tall men, and Philip Ames was positively *statuesque*. He had such luscious black hair and dark eyes and his skin was so white. That came from not getting any sun at the lake. She wondered how he would look in bathing trunks and if he would spend much time with her folks again this year. He was very friendly with them the last season. He seemed to like Ralph—but then, everybody liked her Dad. And Laura was glad to have company.

Of course, if her mother even *suspected* how Nancy felt about the man she would be positively *furious*. But she needn't know, yet. Not unless that Hedy Schuster gave it away, and she'd better not or Nancy would *kill* her.

Hedy knew some boys around on the other side of the lake who had a roadster, and she wanted Nancy to double-date some night, but the first few evenings Nancy stayed at the cottage. Of course she was hoping Philip Ames would come over, and she dressed very carefully; no bobby-socks or kid stuff, only her best slacks and one of those luscious sweaters Laura bought for her at Saks. Those sweaters really *did* something for her, and it was about time Mr. Philip Ames found it out.

But he didn't come over and he *didn't* come over, and it was almost a week now and Nancy was going stark raving goony because Hedy kept telling her what she was missing not coming along.

And then, Philip Ames came over. He was even better than she'd remembered—she'd forgotten all about that deep voice of his. A real *man's* voice, and he didn't *laugh* all the time like those repulsive young icks Hedy was so excited about. He really was reserved; you could tell he was deep. He was glad to see Ralph and Laura, but he didn't smile.

Then Laura said, "You remember our Nancy, don't you, Phil?" and he looked at her and nodded and then he just looked.

Honestly, it just sent *shivers* through her. You'd think she was a mere infant, standing there and trying to keep from blushing. But he didn't seem to notice that. He noticed other things, though, because when they all went out on the porch and sat down, he sat next to her and asked her all sorts of questions.

It wasn't that he was trying to be *polite*. Nancy could tell the difference. For the first time he was *looking* at her as a *woman;* she *knew* it. And she would never forget it, never. Some day they would both remember this moment together. Some day—

RALPH and Laura kept interrupting Philip with questions about his thesis. He said it was coming along and he hoped to finish it this summer. Then Ralph *insisted* on telling him about his old construction job, and Nancy knew he was just enduring it all. He wasn't really interested a bit.

Philip asked her why she didn't have much of a tan, and she said she wasn't going out much these days.

"I don't know what's gotten into her," Laura butted in. "She just mopes around the cottage all day, reading. I wish she'd get some fresh air."

"Oh, mother!" Nancy said. You'd think Laura was talking about a ten-year-old child or something.

"I don't get out very much myself these days," Philip said, rescuing her. "We serious students have to stick together. What say we go for a hike tomorrow evening? Like to see what's going on at the pavilion across the lake, Nancy?"

Would she? Imagine showing up with Philip when Hedy Schuster and her crowd was around. Why it would be—

"No objections, I hope?" Philip was asking Ralph and Laura now and it was OK, of course.

"All right, young lady. See you about eight, then."

That was all that mattered. Of course Ralph had to kid her later about her new boy-friend, and the next afternoon Laura made her promise on her bended knees that she'd be back before eleven. "After all, we don't really *know* very much about Mr. Ames. He seems like a very fine young man, but—"

"*Please*, mother! I hope you don't tell me about the bees and flowers."

Laura looked just a little bit shocked, but she didn't say any more, and Nancy went back to work on her hair.

She scarcely took time out for supper because the upsweep was so difficult. Her hair wasn't really long enough for an upsweep yet, but it added *years* to her appearance and it was worth it. After all, Philip *was* older. Twenty-seven? Twenty-eight? *Certainly* not thirty. Maybe she could ask him tonight. Or in a couple of nights. Because there would be other nights. The whole summer was ahead of them. *Their* summer.

At quarter to eight, Nancy was out on the porch, waiting. It would be just childish to pull that old gag about not being ready yet. Philip didn't *deserve* such treatment. So she was all ready when he came up the path.

"Good evening, my dear."

Yes. He said it. "My dear." Nancy was glad he couldn't see her face plainly in the shadows. The sun was just setting.

She started down the path to join him. "I'm all ready," she said.

Philip sort of backed away and looked down.

"I—I'm sorry," he mumbled. "Came around to tell you I couldn't make it tonight. Something came up all of a sudden—"

"Oh!"

"I hope you understand—"

Why did he keep backing away from her? What was the matter?

"Well, I'll have to be running along now. Some other time, perhaps."

Nancy just stood there with her mouth open. It was a brushoff, all right.

Who did he think he *was*, anyway? Was he *crazy?*

She wanted to say something but couldn't seem to think. It made her so mad she almost cried. The tears came into her eyes and she saw Philip sort of swimming away from her. The moon was just rising over the lake now, cutting the darkness. Philip was disappearing down the path.

All at once he was gone, and then she noticed this thing flying low, along the trees. It squeaked at her and came for her head.

It came straight from where Philip had been standing, and when it got close she could smell it, all rubbery, and see its little red glaring eyes.

It was a black bat.

Nancy didn't scream. She didn't make a sound, just ran straight into the house and up to the bedroom. She didn't begin to cry until she had her mouth biting into the pillow.

LAURA was really swell about the whole thing. She didn't say a word. She pretended she never even *noticed*. Nancy would have *died* if she did.

Besides, what was there to say?

The brush-off wasn't so bad. Nancy got over that. But when she was lying there in bed, in the middle of the night, she got the *other* idea. And you wouldn't even dare *whisper* about things like that.

But it *had* to be that way. He couldn't have just stood her up on the spur of the moment. He *wanted* to be with her.

Oh, she was being silly. Frightened of a bat. Just because Philip Ames lived up there all year and nobody saw him in the daytime and he broke a date when the moon came up and all at once this bat—

Maybe somebody would *know* something. That old woman of a Mr. Prentiss

down at the store. Of course you couldn't come right out and ask him *that*.

Then Nancy thought of a way. The next morning she went down to the store and gave Mr. Prentiss the works.

"We're going to have Mr. Ames over for dinner this week and Mother wanted to find out if there's something special he might like—you know, some kind of canned stuff—"

Mr. Prentiss said it, then. She *knew* he would.

"He don't trade here at all. Never seen him in my place."

Yes. Philip Ames lived here all the year round, but he never came out in the daytime. And he never bought any food. Never. And it was a lie about having him over for dinner because come to think of it, Nancy had never seen him eat anything.

That proved it.

But—she had to be sure. Weren't there other tests?

In the afternoon Nancy made a date with Hedy Schuster to visit the boys across the lake. She was glad, because when she got home after dark, Ralph said he'd met Philip. Philip was coming over tonight for a while.

So Nancy was able to tell him she already had a date and wouldn't be there because she just simply *could not* break it.

Yes, she was glad. She couldn't face him tonight, after what happened and after—what she thought.

And also, that meant tonight would be a good chance to do what she planned. If Philip was out, she could go to the cottage.

IT WASN'T easy. Hedy was just ready to *blow her top* when Nancy broke the date. But she didn't ask any questions, and it was only about nine when Nancy sneaked back past the cottage.

Philip was in there, all right. Nancy went up the path then to his place. It was dark, and there were clouds over the moon. She almost fell flat on her face before she got to the door.

It was locked, anyway. But the window was open. Nancy took off the screen and crawled inside.

The cottage was just a cottage. She had a pencil flashlight and held it down low while she looked around. But there was nothing to see. Nothing!

Of course, the bed hadn't been slept in. At least, it was *made* pretty well for a man. And he didn't have any dishes or stuff. Not even a camp stove in the place. There were suits in the closet and a drawer full of clothes.

It gave Nancy a funny feeling to open his bureau and feel the shirts and socks and stuff, all lying there in stacks. Most of it was brand new.

There was no mirror above the bureau. There was no mirror in the bathroom, or anywhere else. Of course there wouldn't be, if—

But she had to be *sure*.

Nancy finally went over to the work table. There was a typewriter on it, and a big stack of manuscript on one side. Maybe he *was* writing a thesis, after all.

She ruffled through the pile of papers, looking for the title page. It was there.

"Some Notes Upon the Empirical Approach to Demonology in the Modern World."

Somehow, that shocked her more than anything else. It seemed to all tie in. Demonology. In the modern world, today. He was writing about demons, and—things.

Nancy knew now that she'd have to *do* something, tell somebody.

Yes. That was it. Tonight, after Philip left, she'd tell Laura. Tell her that Philip didn't eat and there were no mirrors and he was so pale and nobody saw him in the daytime and a bat flew out of the sunset.

Tell her that Philip was . . . a vampire.

NANCY never knew how she managed to get through that night after she told Laura. Laura was afraid she would go into *hysterics*, until she managed to deadpan. If Laura wanted to take it that way, let her. Some people are just too superior for their own good.

But Nancy wouldn't stop now. She couldn't. If her own mother acted that way, how could you expect anyone else to—?

There was only one thing left to do and that was see it through. At least Laura

wouldn't *say* anything—she positively wouldn't *dare*.

So the next night, when she heard that Philip might drop in again, Nancy excused herself just in time. She waited outside until she saw Philip come up the path. It was cloudy again, but that suited her. Then she headed straight for the cottage down the path.

After she finished there, Nancy came back to their place. Philip was still talking with Laura and Ralph. She could hear him through the window.

"You're afraid of the dark, aren't you?

"Oh, but you are. I know all about you, do you understand? You were afraid of the dark when you were a child. Not because of robbers . . . or thieves . . . or murderers. Children don't think of such things. You were afraid of the dark because of . . . the Bogy Man!

"That's the term your parents used. Bogy Man. One of those smart, sophisticated, grown-up terms, designed to hide the terror behind it. But the terror exists.

"Because, when you were a child, you knew what the Bogy Man looked like. You would see him in your dreams—that black, grinning face with the wicked red eyes. You heard his buzzing voice mumbling to you in sleep, when you had nightmares. And you'd wake up, screaming for your mother.

"Admit it. You *did* scream, didn't you? And now that you're grown up, you laugh about it. Now you're ashamed of your fear.

"But—you're *still* afraid. You may have learned to sneer at witchcraft and demonology. You read slick, scientific explanations dismissing the basic phobias with a psychiatric phrase. Mythology, folklore, primitive ignorance—that's what tales of witches and wizards are, aren't they? There is no Satan, no Hell. Right?

"Yet somehow, you can't keep away from such thoughts. You *will* buy books about the supernatural and patronize horror movies, and visit spiritualists, and listen to ghost stories, and talk about your dreams, and speculate on the Faust legend. Even though you parrot the arguments you've learned—you can't keep away from the mysteries. And ever so often, you'll find yourself in the darkness with that deep fear; the fear which all bravado and pretending cannot drive from your soul.

"Because you know it's true. There *are* such things, such forces, such Evil. And . . . the Bogy Man will get you if you don't watch out!"

Philip laughed. "Now—in the face of all that—is it so difficult for you to understand why your daughter might think I'm a vampire?"

They all laughed. But Nancy didn't laugh. She crouched under the window and bit her lip.

Laura *had* opened her trap, after all. And —to *him!* Probably blabbed everything; about the food and the bat and all the rest. Now they were having a good time over it.

"Damn them!" she muttered.

Philip had keen ears. She heard him get up and come to the window. There was no use in trying to hide. Nancy walked around to the porch and opened the door.

"Why, hello, my dear."

"Nancy—back so soon?"

They were all grinning at her at once. She couldn't look at them. Philip had a big smile on his face, and for the first time she noticed his teeth. His big, white teeth; the points hidden under his full red lips. That was all she could see—Philip's teeth, gleaming at her.

Nancy made the sign of the cross and ran sobbing into her room.

THE next day they had it out.

Laura told her she was acting like a *child*. She had just embarrassed them to *death*.

"But why did you have to tell him about it?" Nancy wanted to know.

"Because he asked us."

"*Asked* you?"

"Yes. Somebody told him you were making inquiries about him at the store."

So *that* was it. *That* was why he came up with his long line about the Bogy Man. Oh, he was clever, all right. Making them think she was just pulling some kid stuff. Making them laugh at her.

It was no use talking to Laura at all, after that. She was just waiting to fly off the handle about the whole thing

"Let's skip it," Nancy said, and went out.

She sat under the trees for a long time that afternoon, just trying to think things out.

After all, she *could* have made a mistake. There were lots of bats flying around at sunset. A man doesn't have to keep house for himself—he can always eat in restaurants. Maybe he *did* work all day on his thesis. You don't have to be a vampire to write about demonology. Many people have gleaming white teeth. And nobody had been bitten in the throat, or killed, or stuff like that. . . .

But *something* was wrong. She *felt* it. Nancy knew what Laura thought . . . that she was just burned up because Philip had brushed her off on the date. That she had been reading too much silly stuff in books. That she invented the whole thing just to make Philip notice her.

Well—it was true. She *did* want him to notice her. He was the most *attractive* man she'd ever met. If only it wasn't true. It *couldn't* be true. But Philip had no mirrors. . . .

She went on like that for *hours*. It was getting dark before she pulled herself together. Laura and Ralph would be going ahead with supper by now.

Nancy got up and started along the path near the lake. She had the jitters, all right; the shadows kept jumping around so, and she walked fast.

All at once something moved out of the shadows up ahead. She nearly jumped out of her skin.

"Did I startle you?"

He was standing there.

"Sorry, I didn't mean to frighten you, my dear."

Just standing there, smiling at her.

"But say, I've been up at the house looking for you."

"For—me?"

"Yes. I wanted to talk to you. Let's take a walk, shall we?"

"Oh, I'm sorry. I have a date—"

"Too bad. I was hoping we might get together. You aren't angry with me about the other night, are you?"

"Not at all." Nancy couldn't figure out what the score was. Philip sounded like an ordinary drip, now. Well, she could handle *that* one.

They kept walking along the path. It was getting darker now, and she wondered if the clouds would lift. Not that she was *really* frightened, but—

Philip was rubbing his eye.

"What's the matter?"

"Got a speck in my eye, or something. Have you got a mirror in your purse, my dear?"

"A—*mirror?*"

"Yes. If you please."

NANCY'S hands trembled so she nearly dropped the purse. But she got the mirror out and gave it to him.

He looked straight into it and rubbed his eye.

Nancy leaned over his shoulder and saw his reflection. He *had* a reflection.

She didn't know what she was doing, what she was saying. The words just blurted out. "You—you looked into the mirror!"

Philip smiled and handed the mirror back to her.

"Of course I did. And I found that sprig of hemlock on my doorknob last night, too. The one you put there when you sneaked off before coming into the cottage to make the sign of the cross at me."

"Why—I—"

"Oh, don't look so startled, Nancy! I know all about your ideas. You thought I was a vampire, didn't you?"

She couldn't say a word. She felt as if she would sink right into the *ground*.

But Philip grinned.

"Just because I work all day and eat in restaurants and walk at night, you wondered about me. My thesis had you puzzled too, didn't it?

"But you're wrong, you know. Vampires wear long black cloaks and during the day they sleep in coffins or grave-earth. You didn't find any cloaks or coffins when you searched my cottage."

"But I—"

"I'm not angry with you, my dear. I just wanted you to get things straight. I wanted you to know that I can touch hemlock and look in mirrors and all the rest."

Nancy looked away. The clouds were lifting from the moon. Like the weight was lifting from her heart.

"I see," she whispered. "I guess you think I'm an awful dope, Philip."

"Not at all." He took her hand. A vampire's hand is cold, but his touch was warm. "I think you're a very lovely girl. You have beautiful hair, Nancy. Did you know that? Look—the moon is rising. Gleaming on your hair. I can see you, now. Nancy—you aren't afraid of me any more?"

"No, Philip. I never *was* afraid. Not really. I—I guess Laura was right. It was my subconscious."

"Subconscious? Scientific, aren't we?"

"You know. I must have thought up all this vampire stuff just to make you *notice* me. And besides, vampires are supposed to be tall, dark and handsome—like you—"

Philip held her very close, then.

"You're a very clever little girl, Nancy. Very clever. It's a pity you had to stir up such a fuss over nothing."

"But I didn't mean it, *really*. And it's all over now. Only Laura and Ralph know."

PHILIP didn't kiss her yet. He shook his head. "I'm afraid it isn't that simple after all. Like throwing a stone into a pool. Ripples."

"Ripples?"

"Laura and Ralph will talk to people. Make a joke out of it. Laura has, already—she said something to Prentiss. Pretty soon people will start whispering. Wondering. A stranger is always a suspect, Nancy. A reputation is a very flimsy thing. It's no use, my dear. I shall have to clear out of here."

Nancy couldn't believe her ears.

"What do you care?" she whispered. "Let them talk. We'll just laugh at them."

"I'll laugh at them," said Philip. "You won't."

He held her very close and she couldn't see his face. He mumbled against her shoulder.

"Too bad you were such a meddling little fool, Nancy. But I can't let you get away now. It would spoil everything. You've guessed too much."

Nancy pulled away, but he held her. He was very strong.

"Philip! Let me go!"

He kept pulling her closer—closer—there was no escape.

The moonlight was full on his face now, and for the first time Nancy noticed the *change*.

"Philip—it's true, then! You *are* a vampire!"

"Oh no, my dear," he whispered. "I'm not a vampire. I'm . . . just a *werewolf!*"

TREE WOMAN

By Dorothy Quick

DEEP in the fastness of a Druid wood
She saw no path between the somber trees;
Leaf-mold and moss were dank, and where she stood
Silence was older than the cypresses.
There crept along her veins a chilly flow
Of something not of flesh; her fingers curled
On emptiness. Ten thousand years ago
This might have been the dawn-dusk of the world!

Strange how her feet were rooted there; she heard
Her lips moan like the wind; her arms, uptossed,
Were long and supple, and a dark-winged bird
Perched on her shoulder. Beautiful and lost,
She felt upon her brow, once white and fair,
A crown of leaves that rustled softly there!

The Man in Crescent Terrace

"BUT this is most pleasant, *vraiment,*" Jules de Grandin told me as we reached the corner where the black-and-orange sign announced a bus stop. "The *moteur,* he is a convenience. Yes. *Whiz—pouf!* he takes you where you wish to go all quickly, and *sifflement!* he brings you back all soon. But where there is no need for haste—*non.* It is that we grow soft and lazy substituting gasoline for walking-muscle, Friend Trowbridge. Is it not better that we walk on such a lovely evening?"

The brief October dusk had deepened into dark as if a curtain had been drawn across the sky, and in the east a star sprang out and a cluster of little stars blinked after it. A little breeze came up and rustled faintly in the almost-leafless maples, but it seemed to me a faint sound of uneasiness came from them, not the comfortable cradle-song of evening, but a sort of restrained moaning.

And with the sibilation of the wind there came the sound of running footsteps, high heels pounding in a sharp staccato on the sidewalk with a drumming-like panic made audible. The diffused glow of a street lamp showed her to us as she ran, hurrying with the awkward, knock-kneed gait of a woman unused to sprinting, casting fearful looks across her shoulder each few steps, but never slackening her terror-goaded pace.

It was not until she was almost within touching-distance that she saw us, and gave vent to a gasp of relief mingled with fright.

"Help!" she panted, then, almost fiercely, "run—run! He—it's coming. . . ."

"Tenez, who is it comes, *Mademoiselle?"* de Grandin asked. "Tell us who it is annoys you. I shall take pleasure in tweaking his nose—"

"Run—run, you fool!" the girl broke in hysterically, clutching at my lapel as a drowning person might clutch at a floating plank. "If it catches me—" Her breathless words blurred out and the stiffness seemed to go from her knees as she slumped against me, flaccid as a rag-doll.

I braced her slight weight in my arms, half turning as I did so, and felt the warm stickiness of fresh blood soak through my glove. "De Grandin," I exclaimed, "she's been hurt—bleeding—"

"Hein?" he deflected the sharp gaze which he had leveled down the darkened street. "What is it that you say—*mordieu,* but you have right, Friend Trowbridge! We must see to her—*hola, taxi, à moi, tout vite!"* he waved imperatively at the rattle-trap cab that providentially emerged from the tree-arched tunnel of the street.

"Sorry, gents," the driver slowed but did not halt his vehicle, "I'm off duty an' got just enough gas to git back to the garage—"

"Pardieu, then you must reassume the duty right away, at once, immediately!" de Grandin broke in. "We are physicians and this lady has been injured. We must convey her to the surgery for treatment, and I have five—*non,* three—dollars to offer as an incentive—"

"I heard you the first time, chief," the cabby interrupted. "For five dollars it's a deal. Hop in. Where to?"

OUR impromptu patient had not regained consciousness when we reached my house, and while de Grandin concluded fiscal arrangements with the chauffeur I carried her up the front steps and into the surgery. She could not have weighed a hundred pounds, for she was slightly, almost boyishly built, and the impression of boyishness was heightened by the way in

---

By SEABURY QUINN

which her flaxen blond hair was cropped closely at back and sides and combed straight back from her forehead in short soft waves. Her costume added little to her weight. It was a dress of black watered silk consisting of a sleeveless blouse cut at

Mummys are to be found in museums; not running after people in the street!

dle neckline in the Madame Chiang manner and a pleated skirt that barely reached her knees. She wore no hat, but semi-elbow length gloves of black suede fabric were on her hands and her slim, small, unstockinged feet were shod with black suede sandals criss-crossed with straps of gold. If she had had a handbag it had been lost or thrown away in her panic-stricken flight.

"Ah—so, let us see what is to be done," de Grandin ordered as I laid my pretty burden on the examination table. Deftly he undid the row of tiny jet buttons that fastened the girl's blouse at the shoulder, and with a series of quick, gentle tweaks and twitches drew the garment over her head. She wore neither slip nor bandeau, only the briefest of sheer black-crêpe step-ins; we had only to turn her on her side to inspect her injury.

This was not very extensive, being an incised wound some four inches long beginning just beneath the right scapula and slanting toward the vertebral aponeurosis at an angle of about sixty degrees. At its commencement it was quite deep, striking through the derma to the subcutaneous tissue, but at termination it trailed off to a mere superficial skin wound. It was bleeding freely and its clean-cut edges gaped widely owing to the elasticity of the skin and the retraction of the fibrous tissue. "H'm," de Grandin murmured as he bent above the wound. "From the cleanness of its lips this cut was evidently inflicted by a razor or a knife that had been honed to razor-sharpness. Do not you agree, Friend Trowbridge?"

I looked across his shoulder and nodded.

"*Précisément.* And from the way it slants and from the fact that it is so much deeper at commencement than at termination, one may assume the miscreant who inflicted it stole up behind her, hoping to take her by surprise, but struck a split-second too late. The blow was probably directed with a slicing motion at her neck, but she was already in flight when her assailant struck. *Tiens*, as things are, she had luck with her, this little pretty poor one. A little deeper and the weapon might have struck into the rhomboideus, a little to the right, it might have sliced an artery. As it is—" He wiped the welling blood away, sponged the wound and surrounding epidermis with alcohol and pinched the gaping lips of the incision together in perfect apposition, then laid a pad of gauze on the closed wound and secured it with a length of adhesive plaster. "*Voilà*," he looked up with an elfin grin. "She are almost good like new now I damn think, Friend Trowbridge. Her gown is still too wet with blood for wearing, but—" he paused a moment, eyes narrowed in thought, then: "Excuse me one small, little second, if you please," he begged and rushed from the surgery.

I could hear him rummaging about upstairs, and wondered what amazing notion might have taken possession of his active, unpredictable French brain, but before I had a chance to call to him he came back with a pleased smile on his lips and a Turkish towel from the linen closet draped across his arm. "Regard me, Friend Trowbridge," he ordered. "See what a fellow of infinite resource I am." He wrapped the soft, tufted fabric about the girl's slim torso, covering her from armpits to knees, and fastened the loose end of the towel with a pair of safety pins. "*Morbleu*, I think perhaps a brilliant *couturier* was lost when I decided to become a physician," he announced as he surveyed his handiwork. "Does she not look *très chic* in my creation? By damn it, I shall say she does!"

"Humphf," I admitted, "she's adequately covered, if that's any satisfaction to you."

"I had expected more enthusiastic praise," he told me as he drew the corners of his mouth down, "but—*que voulez-vous?* —the dress-designer like the prophet must expect to be unhonored in his own country. Yes." He nodded gloomily and lifted the girl from the table to an easy chair, taking care to turn her so her weight would not impinge upon her injured shoulder.

HE PASSED a bottle of ammonium carbonate beneath her nostrils, and as the pungent fumes made her nose wrinkle in the beginnings of a sneeze and her pale lids fluttered faintly: "So, *Mademoiselle*, you are all better now? But certainly. Drink this, if you will be so kind." He held a glass of brandy to her lips. "Ah, that is good, *n'est-ce-pas? Morbleu*, I think

it is so good that I shall have a small dose of the same!

"And now," with small fists on his hips and arms akimbo he took his stand before her, "will you have the kindness to tell us all about it?"

She cowered back in the chair and we could see a pulse flutter in her throat. Her eyes were almost blank, but fear stared from them like a death's head leering from a window. "Who are—where am I?" she begged piteously. "Where is it? Did you see it?" As her fingers twisted and untwisted themselves in near-hysteria then came in contact with the towel swathed round her. They seemed to feel it unbelievingly, as if they had an intelligence separate from the rest of her. Then she looked down, gave a startled, gasping cry and leaped from the chair. "Where am I?" she demanded. "What has happened to me? Why am I dressed in—in this?"

De Grandin pressed her gently back in the chair. "One question and one answer at a time, if you please, *Mademoiselle*. You are in the house of Dr. Samuel Trowbridge. This is he," he bowed in my direction, "and I am Dr. Jules de Grandin. You have been injured, though not seriously, and that is why you were brought here when you swooned in the street. The garment you are wearing is fashioned from a bath towel. I am responsible for it, and thought it quite *chic*, though neither you nor Dr. Trowbridge seem to fancy it, which is a great pity and leaves your taste in dress open to question. You have it on because your gown was disfigured when you were hurt; also it is a little soiled at present. That can and will be remedied shortly.

"Now," his little round blue eyes twinkled and he laughed reassuringly, "I have answered your questions. Will not you be so kind as to answer ours?"

Some of the fear went out of her eyes and she managed to contrive a little smile. People usually smiled back at de Grandin. "I guess I've been seeing too many horror films," she confessed. "I saw the operating table and the bandages and instruments, and smelled the medicines, then when I realized I was dressed in this my first thought was that I'd been kidnaped and—"

De Grandin's shout of laughter drowned her half-ashamed confession. "*Mordieu*, you thought that you were in the house of Monsieur Dracula J. Frankenstein, and that the evil, mad surgeons were about to make a guinea-pig or white rabbit of you, *n'est-ce-pas, Mademoiselle?* I assure you that fear is quite groundless. Dr. Trowbridge is an eminently respectable practitioner, and while I have been accused of many things, human vivisection is not one of them.

"Some three-quarters of an hour ago Dr. Trowbridge and I stood at Colfax and Dorondo Streets, waiting for an omnibus. We observed you coming toward us, running like Atalanta racing from the suitors, and obviously very much afraid. When you reached us you cried out for us to run also, then swooned in Dr. Trowbridge's arms. It was then we saw that you had been injured. *Alors*, we did the proper thing. We bundled you into a taxi and brought you here for treatment. You know why we removed your dress, and why you wear my own so smart creation.

"That puts you in possession of the facts, *Mademoiselle*. It is for you to tell us what transpired before we met. You may speak freely, for we are physicians, and anything you say will be held in strict confidence. Also, if we can, we shall be glad to help you."

She gave him a small grateful smile. "I think you've done a lot to help me already, sir. I am Edna Laurace and I live with my aunt, Mrs. Dorothy Van Artsdalen at 1840 Pennington Parkway. This afternoon I called on some friends living in Clinton Avenue, and walked through Crescent Terrace to Dorondo Street to take a number four bus. I was almost through the Terrace when—" she stopped, and we could see the flutter of a little blue vein at the base of her throat as her heart action quickened—"when I heard someone running."

"*Parbleu*, another runner?" murmured Jules de Grandin. Aloud he ordered: "Proceed, if you please, *Mademoiselle*."

"Naturally, I looked around. It was getting dark, and I was all alone—"

"One understands. And then what was it that you saw?"

"A man was running toward me. Not exactly toward me, but in the same di-

rection I was going. He was a poor-looking man; that is, his clothes were out of press and seemed too loose for him, and his shoes scuffed on the pavement as he ran—you know how a bum's shoes sound—as if they were about two sizes too large? He seemed almost out of breath and scared of something, for every few steps he'd glance back across his shoulder. Then I saw what he was running from, and started to run, too. It was—" her hands went up to her eyes, as if to shut some frightful vision out, and she trembled as if a sudden draft of cold air had blown on her—"it was a mummy!"

"A *what?*" I demanded.

"*Comment?*" Jules de Grandin almost barked.

"All right," she answered as a faint flush stained her pale cheeks, "tell me I'm crazy. I still say it was a mummy; one of those things you see in museums, you know. It was tall, almost six feet, and bone-thin. As far as I could make out it was about the color of a tan shoe and seemed to be entirely unclothed. It ran in a peculiar sort of way, not like a man, but sort o' jerkily, like a marionette moved by unseen wires; but it ran fast. The man behind me ran with all his might, but it kept gaining on him without seeming to exert itself at all."

Her recitation seemed to recall her terror, for her breathing quickened as she spoke and she paused to swallow every few words. "At first I thought the mummy had a cane in its hand, but as it came nearer I saw it was a stick about two—maybe three—feet long, tipped with a long, flat spearhead made of gold, or perhaps copper.

"You know how it is when you're frightened that way. You run for all you're worth, yet somehow you have to keep looking back. That's the way I was. I'd run a little way, then feel I *had* to look back. Maybe I couldn't quite convince myself it was a mummy. It was, all right, and it was gaining steadily on the man behind me.

"Just as I reached Dorondo Street I heard an awful cry. Not exactly a scream, and not quite a shout, but a sort of combination of the two, like *'ow-o-o-oh!'* and I looked back just in time to see the mummy slash the man with its spear. It didn't stab him. It chopped him with the edge of its weapon. That's when he yelled." She paused a moment and let her breath out in a long, quivering sigh. "He didn't fall; not right away. He sort o' staggered, stumbling over his own feet, or tripping over something that wasn't there, then reeled forward a few steps, with his arms spread out as if he reached for something to break his fall. Then he went down upon his face and lay there on the sidewalk perfectly still, with his arms and legs spread out like an X."

"And then?" de Grandin prompted softly as she paused again.

"Then the thing stood over him and began sticking him with its spear. It didn't move fast nor seem in any hurry; it just stood over him and stuck the spear into him again and again, like—like a woman testing a cake with a broomstraw, if that means anything to you."

DE GRANDIN nodded grimly. "It does, indeed, *Mademoiselle*. And then?"

"Then I *did* start to run, and presently I saw it coming after me. I kept looking back, like I told you, and for a while I didn't see it; then all at once there it was, moving jerkily, and sort o' weaving back and forth across the sidewalk, almost as if it weren't quite sure which way I'd gone. That gave me an idea. I ran until I came to a dark spot in the road, the point between two street lamps where the light was faintest, and rushed across the street, running on tiptoes. Then I ran quietly as I could down the far side of the road, keeping to the shadows as much as possible. For a time I thought I'd shaken it, for when it came to where I'd crossed the street it seemed to pause and look about. Then it seemed to realize what I'd done and came across to my side. Three times I crossed the street, and each time I gained a few yards on it; but I was getting out of breath and knew I couldn't keep the race up much longer.

"Then I had another idea. From the way the creature ran it seemed to me it must be blind, or almost so, and followed me by sound more than sight. So next time I crossed the street instead of running I hid behind a big tree. Sure enough, when the thing came over it seemed at fault, and

stood there, less than ten feet from me, turning round and round, pointing its spear first one way, then another, like a blind man feeling with his cane for some familiar object.

"It might have missed me altogether if I could have stayed stock-still, but when I got a close-up look at it—it was so terrible I couldn't keep a gasp of terror back. That did it. In an instant it was after me again, and I was dodging round and round the tree.

"You can't imagine how horrible it was. The thing was blind, all right. Once I got a good look at its face—its lips were like tanned leather and I could see the jagged line of its teeth where the dried-up mouth had come a little open, and both its eyes were tightly shut. But blind or not it could hear me, and it was like a dreadful game of blind man's buff, I dodging back to keep the tree between us, then crouching for a sprint to the next tree and doubling and turning around that, and all the time that dreadful thing following, sometimes thrusting at me with its spear, sometimes chopping at me with it, but never hurrying. If it had rushed or sprung or jumped at me it wouldn't have seemed half so terrifying. But it didn't. It just kept after me, seeming to know that sooner or later it would find me.

"I'd managed to get back my breath while we were dodging back and forth around the trees, and finally I made another break for freedom. That gave me a short respite, for when I started running this time I kept on the parking, and my feet made no noise on the short grass, but before I'd run a hundred feet I trod on a dried, curled-up leaf. It didn't make much noise, just the faintest crackling, but that was enough to betray me, and in another second the mummy was after me. D'ye remember that awful story in Grimms' Fairy Tales where the prince is captured by a giant, and manages to blind him, but finds that the charmed ring upon his finger forces him to keep calling, 'Here am I,' each time he eludes his pursuer? That's the way it was with me. The thing that followed me was blind, but any slightest sound was all it needed for direction, and no matter how still I tried to be I couldn't help making some small noise to betray my position.

"Twice more I halted to play blind man's buff with it around the streetside trees, and the last time it slashed me with its spear. I felt the cut like a switch on my shoulder, it didn't hurt so much as smart, but in a moment I could feel the blood run down my back and knew that I'd been wounded. Then I lost my head completely and rushed straight down the sidewalk, running for my life. That would have been the end of me had it not been for the cat."

"The cat, *Mademoiselle?*" de Grandin asked.

"Yes, sir. It—the mummy—was about a hundred and fifty feet behind me, and gaining every step, when a big black cat came across the sidewalk. I don't know where it came from, but I hope that it has cream for dinner and two nice, fat mice for dessert every day for the rest of its life. You know how cats act sometimes when they see something coming at them—how they sort o' crouch down and stay still, as if they hope whatever it is that threatens 'em won't see 'em if they don't move? That's the way this cat did—at first. But when the mummy was almost on it, it jumped up and arched its back, puffed out its tail and made every hair along its spine stand straight up. Then it let out a miaul almost loud enough to wake the dead.

"That stopped the mummy in its tracks. You know how deceptive a caterwaul can be—how it rises and falls like a banshee's howl, and seems to come from half a dozen places at once? I think that's what must have happened. The mummy was attuned to catch the slightest sound vibration, like a delicate radio instrument, but it couldn't seem to locate the exact place whence the cat's miaul came.

"I glanced back once, and if it hadn't been so horrible it would have seemed ludicrously funny, that murderous blind mummy standing there, swaying back and forth as if the unseen strings that moved it had suddenly come loose, turning its leathery, unseeing face this way and that, and that big black tomcat standing stiff-legged in its path, its back arched up, its tail fluffed out, and its eyes blazing like two little spots of green fire. They might

have stayed that way for two minutes, maybe more. I didn't stop to watch, but kept on running for dear life. The last I saw of them the puss was circling round the mummy, walking slowly and stiff-kneed, the way cats do before they close for a fight, never taking its eyes off the thing, and growling those deep belly-growls that angry cats give. I think the mummy slashed at it with its spear, but I can't be sure of that. I know the cat did not give a scream as it almost certainly would have if it had been struck. Then I saw you and Dr. Trowbridge standing by the bus stop, and" she spread her slim hands in a gesture of finality—"here we are."

"We are, indeed," de Grandin conceded with a smile, "but we cannot remain so. It grows late and *Tante* Dorothée will worry. Come, we will take you to her and tomorrow you may come to have your wound dressed, or if you prefer you may go to your own family physician." He took his chin between his thumb and forefinger and looked thoughtfully at her. "I fear your dress is not yet quite dry, *Mademoiselle*, and from my own experience I know blood-wet garments are most uncomfortable. We shall ride in Dr. Trowbridge's *moteur*—do you greatly mind retaining the garment I devised for you, wearing one of my top-coats above it? No one would notice—"

"Why, of course, sir," the girl smiled up into his eyes. "This is really quite a scrumptuous dress; I'm sorry I said horrid things about it."

"*Tiens*, the compliment is much appreciated, *Mademoiselle*, even though it is a bit late," he returned with a bow. "Now, if we are all ready. . . ." He stood aside to let her precede us to the hall.

"Perhaps it would be best if you did not tell *Tante* Dorothée all your adventure," he advised as I drew up before the modest but attractive little house where she lived with her aunt. "She might not understand—"

"You mean she'd never believe me!" the girl broke in with what was more than the suggestion of a giggle. "I don't think I'd believe a person who told me such a story." Her air of gaiety dropped from her and her laughing eyes became serious. "I know it really couldn't have happened," she admitted. "Mummies just don't run around the streets killing people like that—but all the same, it's so!"

"*Tu parles, ma petite*," de Grandin chuckled. "When you have grown as old as I, which will not be for many years, you'll know as I do that most of the impossible things are quite true. Yes, I say it."

"YOU mean you actually believe that cock and bull yarn she told us," I demanded as we drove home.

"But certainly."

"But it's so utterly fantastic. Mummies, as she herself admitted, don't run about the streets and kill people—"

"Mummies ordinarily do not run about the streets at all," he corrected. "Nevertheless, I believe her."

"Humpf. Next thing, I suppose, you'll be calling Costello in on the case."

"If I am not much more mistaken that I think the good Costello will not need my summons," he returned as we reached my driveway. "Is not that he at our front door?"

"*Hola, mon Lieutenant*," he called as he leaped from the car. "What fortunate breeze has wafted you hither?"

"Good evenin' gentlemen," Detective-Lieutenant Jeremiah Costello answered as he stepped back from the door. " 'Tis luck I'm in, fer Mrs. McGinnis wuz just afther tellin' me as how ye'd driv away, wid yer dinner practic'ly on th' table, an' hadn't said a word about when ye'd come back."

"But now that we are so well met, you will have dinner with us?" asked the Frenchman.

"Thank ye kindly, sor. I've had me supper, an' I'm on duty—"

"*Ah bah*," de Grandin interrupted, "I fear you are deteriorating. Since when have you not been competent to eat two dinners, then smack your lips and look about for more? But even if you have no appetite, you will at least lend us your company and share a cup of coffee, a liqueur and a cigar?"

"Why, yes, sor, I'll be glad o' that," Costello returned. "An' would ye be afther listenin' to me tale o' woe th' while?"

"Assuredly, *mon vieux*. Your shop-talk is invariably interesting."

"Well, sors," Costello told us as he

drained his demi-tasse and took a sip from the glass of old whiskey de Grandin had poured for him, "it's like this way: I wuz about to lave th' office an' call it a day, fer this bein' a lootenant ain't as easy as it wuz when I wuz sergeant, d'ye understand, an' I'd been hard at it since eight o'clock this mornin', when all to onct me tellyphone starts ringin' like a buzz-saw cuttin' through a nail, an' Dogherty o' th' hommyside squad's on th' other end. He an' Schmelz, as fine a lad as never ate a bite o' bacon wid his breakfast eggs an' fasted all day on Yom Kippur, had been called to take a look into th' killin' o' Louis Westbrook, also known as Looie th' Louse. He wuz a harmless sort o' bum, th' Louse, never doin' much agin th' law except occasionally gettin' drunk an' maybe just a mite disorderly, an' actin' as a stooly fer th' boys sometimes—"

"A stooly?" echoed de Grandin. "And what is that, if you please?"

"Sure, sor, ye know. A stool pigeon."

"Ah, yes, one comprehends. A *dénonciateur*, we use them in the *Sureté*, also."

"Yes, sor. Just so. Well, as I wuz sayin', Looie'd been found dead as a mackerel in Crescent Terrace, an'—"

"*Morbleu*, do you say it? In Crescent Terrace?"

"That same, sor. An', like I says—"

"One moment, if you please. He was dead by a wound inflicted from the rear, possibly in the head, but more likely in the neck, and on his body were numerous deep punctured wounds—"

"Howly Mither! He wuz all o' that, sor. How'd ye guess it?"

"I did not guess, my friend. I knew. Proceed with your description of the homicide."

"Well, sor, like ye said, Looie had been cut down from th' rear, swiped acrost th' neck wid a sword or sumpin like that. His spinal column wuz hacked through just about here—" he turned his head and held his finger to his neck above the second cervical vertebra. "I've seen men kilt just so when I was in th' Fillypines. They're willin' workers wid th' bolo, those Fillypino johnnies, as many a bloody Jap can certify. An' also like ye said, sor, he wuz punctured full o' deep, wide wounds all up his back an' down his legs. Like a big wide-bladed knife or sumpin had been pushed into him.

"Ever see th' victim o' one o' them Comorra torture-killin's—th' *Sfregio* or Death o' th' Seventy Cuts, as they calls it? Well, th' way this pore Joe had been mangled reminded me o' them, on'y—"

"A moment, if you please," de Grandin interrupted. "This Joseph of whom you speak? We were discussing the unhappy demise of Monsieur Louis the Louse; now you introduce a new victim—"

"Arrah, Dr. de Grandin, sor, be aisy," Costello cut in, halfway between annoyance and laughter, "when I say Joe I mean Looie—"

"*Ha?* It is that they are identical?"

"Yes, sor. Ye might say so."

De Grandin glanced at me with quizzically raised brows then lifted narrow shoulders in the sort of shrug a Frenchman gives when he wants to indicate complete dissociation with the matter. "Say on, my friend," he ordered in a weary voice. "Tell us more of this Monsieur Joseph-Louis and his so tragic dissolution."

"Well, sor, like I wuz tellin' ye, Looie'd done a bit o' stoolin' now an' then, but it wuz mostly small-fry, unimportant stuff puttin' th' finger on dips an' dope-peddlers or tippin' th' department off when a pawnbroker acted as a fence; sometimes slippin us th' office when a loft burglary wuz cookin', an' th' like o' that. We hadn't heard that he'd been mixed up with any of these now black-handers, so when he turns up dead an' all butchered like I said we're kind o' wondering who kilt him, an why."

"I have the answer to one part of your question, *mon Lieutenant*," de Grandin informed him with a grave nod.

"An' have ye, now, sor? That's juy grand. Would ye be afther tellin' me who done it, just for old times' sake? That is if it's not a military secret."

"*Mais non. Point du tout.* He was killed by a mummy."

"A—glory be to God!" Costello drained his glass of whiskey at a gulp. "Th' man says he wuz kilt be a mummy! Sure, Dr de Grandin, sor, ye wuz always a great one for kiddin', but this is business."

De Grandin's little round blue eyes were hard and cold as ice as they looked into Costello's. "I am entirely serious, my friend. I who speak to you say he was slain by a mummy."

"O.K., sor. If ye say so, I s'pose it's so. I've never known ye to give me a bum steer, but sayin' a gink's been kilt be a mummy is pretty close to tryin' to tell me that pigs fly an' tomcats sing grand op'ry. Now, th' question is, 'How're we gonna find this murderin' mummy?' Do they kape him in a museum, or does he run loose in th' streets?"

"*Le bon Dieu* only knows," the little Frenchman answered with a shrug, "but perhaps we can narrow down our search. Tomorrow I shall go to the morgue and inspect the corpse of Monsieur Joseph-Louis. Meantime there is something you can do to aid the search. This Crescent Terrace, as I recall it, is a little street. Secure the names of every householder and compile as complete a *dossier* on each as is possible: what his habits are, whence he comes, how long he has lived there—everything. The smallest little detail is important. There are no unimportant things in such a case as this. You comprehend?"

"I do, sor."

"*Très bon.*" He cast a speculative look at the decanter of whiskey. "There is at least three-quarters of a quart left in the bottle, my friends. Let us do a little serious drinking."

THE street lights were coming on and the afterglow was faint in the west under the first cold stars when we gathered in my study for a council of war next evening. De Grandin tapped a sheaf of neatly typed pages lying on the table before him. "This Monsieur Grafton Loftus is our most likely suspect," he announced. "This is the *dossier* compiled on him by your department, Friend Costello:

> No. 18 Crescent Terrace—Loftus, Grafton. Unmarried, about fifty. Born in England. Came to this country from London four years ago. No occupation, maintains fair account in the Clifton Trust Co., periodically replenished by foreign bank drafts. Pays all bills promptly. Goes out very little, has no intercourse with neighbors. Few visitors. Nothing known of personal habits, hobbies, etc. No pets. Neighbors on each side speak of having heard low, peculiar whistle, no tune, coming from his home at night, sometimes continuing for half hour at a time, have also noted strong smell like that of Chinese incense coming from his house at times.

"Perhaps I am a trifle dull," I said sarcastically, "but I fail to see where anything in that *dossier* gives ground for suspicion. We haven't any personal description of Mr. Loftus. Does he look like a mummy?"

"I would not say so," de Grandin replied. "I took occasion to call on him this afternoon, pretending to ask direction to the house of an entirely mythical Monsieur John Garfield. Monsieur Loftus came to the door—after I had rung his doorbell unremittingly for half an hour—and seemed considerably annoyed. He is a big man, most decidedly stout, bald-headed, with a red face and fat cheeks threatening to engulf his small eyes. His lips are very red, his mouth is small, and pouts like that of a petulant child. Also, he was distressingly uncivil when I asked most courteously for the non-existent Monsieur Garfield's address. I did not like his looks. I do not like him. No. Not at all."

"All the same, there's nothing in what you've told us to indicate he goes around disguised as a mummy and murdering inoffensive bums," I persisted.

"*Ah bah!*" he answered. "You vex me, Friend Trowbridge. Attend me, if you please. When I had seen this Monsieur Loftus I called New Scotland Yard on Transatlantic telephone, and talked with my friend Inspector Grayson, formerly of the British Intelligence. He told me much I wished to know. By example: Monsieur Loftus served with the British troops in Egypt and Mesopotamia during the first World War. While there he foregathered with decidedly unsavory characters, and was three times court-martialed for being absent without leave when native powwows were in progress. Of no importance, you say? Very well, to continue: When he returned

to England he became identified with several malodorous secret societies. The first of these was the Gorgons, ostensibly a nature-worship cult, but actually concerned with diabolism. He appears to have grown tired of these and joined the cult of Lokapala, which comprised as sinister a company of blackguards as could be found anywhere. They were known to have sacrificed animals with revolting cruelties, and were suspected of having indulged in human sacrifice at least on one occasion. The police broke this gang up and Loftus, with several others, was sentenced to a short term in the workhouse.

"We next hear of him as a member of the gang known as Los Leopardos, the Human Leopards, whose headquarters in the Shooter's Hill locality of Blackheath was raided by the police in 1938. Again the estimable Monsieur Loftus served a short term in jail. He was also implicated in the deviltries of Rowely Thorne, whose nemesis our mutual friend John Thunstone is. Now," he swept us with a cold, challenging stare, "you will admit the company he kept was something less than desirable."

"That may be so," I conceded, "but all the same—"

"But all the same he was a member of the Esoteric Society of the Resurrection. You comprehend?"

"I can't say that I do. Was that society one of those half-baked religious organizations?"

"NEITHER half-baked nor religious, in the true sense of the term, my friend. They were drawn from every stratum of society, from every country, every race. Scientists some of them were, men and women who had perverted their knowledge to base ends. Others were true mystics, Indian, Egyptian, Syrian, Druse, Chinese, English, French, Italian, even some Americans. They brought together the wisdom—all the secret, buried knowledge—of the East, and mated—not married—it to the science of the West. The offspring was a dreadful, illegitimate monster. Here, let me read you a transcription of an eyewitness' account of a convocation of the society:

The members of the cult, all robed in flowing white draperies, gathered in the courtyard of the society's headquarters around the replica of an Egyptian tomb with heavy doors like those of an ice box held fast with triple locks and bolts of solid silver. After a brief ceremony of worship four members of the society wearing black and purple draperies came out of the house, led by the Grand Hierophant robed in red vestments. They halted before the tomb and at a sign from the High Priest all members of the congregation stopped their ears with their fingers while the Hierophant and his acolytes mumbled the secret formula while the silver locks and bolts were being unfastened. Then the High Priest cried the Secret Word of Power while his assistants threw incense on the brazier burning before the tomb.

In a moment they emerged bearing a black-painted bier or stretcher on which lay the unwrapped body of an Egyptian mummy. Three times they bore the embalmed corpse around the courtyard that every member of the congregation might look on it and know that it was dead. Then they went back into the tomb.

More incense was burned while everybody knelt on the bare earth and stared fixedly at the entrance of the tomb. Minutes passed, then at the gaping doorway of the tomb appeared the mummy, standing upright and moving slowly and mechanically, like a marionette moved by invisible wires. In its right hand it held a short spear tipped with the tempered copper that only the ancient Egyptians knew how to make.

The Chief Hierophant walked before the mummy, blowing softly on a silver whistle each few steps, and the revivified litch seemed to hear and follow the sound of the whistle. Three times the mummy followed the High Priest in a circuit of the courtyard, then priest and living corpse went back into the tomb. The priest came out in a few moments and quickly fastened the silver locks of the tomb door. He was perspiring profusely, although the night was cold.

The strictest silence was enjoined dur-

ing the entire ceremony, and instant dismissal from the society was the penalty decreed for any member making even the slightest sound while the mummy was out of the tomb. Once, it was said, a woman member became hysterical when the mummy emerged from the tumulous, and burst into a fit of weeping. The litch leaped on her in an instant and struck her down with its spear, then hacked her body to ribbons as she lay writhing on the earth. It was only by the shrilling of the High Hierophant's whistle that the thing was finally persuaded to give over its bloody work and lured back to the tomb.

"What do you think from that, *hein?*" he demanded as he finished reading.

"It sounds like the ravings of a hashish-eater, or the recollection of a most unpleasant dream," I volunteered.

There was no hint of impatience in the smile he turned on me. "I agree, Friend Trowbridge. It are assuredly *extra ordinem* —outside things' usual and accepted order —as the lawyers say; but most of us make the mistake of drawing the line of the possible too close. When I read this transcription over the 'phone to our friend Monsieur Manly Wade Wellman this afternoon he agreed it was entirely possible for such things to be.

"Now," once more he swept us with his fixed, unwinking cat-stare, "me, I have evolved an hypothesis: This so odious Loftus, who had been a member of this altogether destestable society, has made use of opportunity to cheat. While others stopped their ears as the Hierophant pronounced the secret invocation—the Word of Power as the witness to the ceremony calls it—he listened and became familiar with it. He anticipated making similar experiments, I have no doubt, but the onset of the war and the bombings of London interfered most seriously with his plans. *Alors,* he came to this country, took up residence in the quietly respectable Crescent Terrace, and proceeded with his so unholy trials. That would account for the incense his neighbors smelled at night, also for the whistlings they heard. Do not you agree?"

"I don't agree," I answered, "but if we grant your premises I see the logic of your conclusions."

"Triomphe!" he exclaimed with a grin. "At last good skeptical Friend Trowbridge agrees with me, even though he qualifies his agreement. We make the progress.

"And now, my friends," he turned from me to Costello, Dogherty and Schmelz, "if we are ready, let us go. The darkness comes and with it—*eh bien,* who shall say what will eventuate?"

CRESCENT TERRACE was a short semilunar byway connecting Clinton Avenue and Dorondo Street built up on the west side with neat houses. There were only twenty of them in the block, and their numbers ran consecutively, since a small park faced the east curb of the street.

We drew up at the far side of the park and walked across its neatly clipped lawns between beds of coleus and scarlet sage. At the sidewalk we halted and scanned the blank-faced houses opposite. "The second building from the end is Number 18," Jules de Grandin whispered. "Do you take station behind yonder clump of shrubs, Friend Costello, and Sergeants Dogherty and Schmelz will form an ambuscade just behind that hedge of hemlock. Friend Trowbridge, it is best that you remain with the Lieutenant, so that we shall have two parties of two each for reserves."

"An' where will you be, sor?" Costello asked.

"Me, I shall be the lure, the bait, the stalking-horse. I shall parade as innocently as an unborn lamb before his lair."

"But we can't let ye take th' risk all by yerself, sor," Costello objected, only to be cut short by de Grandin's sharp:

"Zut! You will do exactly as I say, *mon ami.* Me, I have worked this strategy out mathematically and know what I am doing. Also, I was not born yesterday, or even day before. *A bientôt, mes amis."* He slipped into the shadows silently as a bather letting himself down into dark water. In a moment we saw him emerge from the far side of the park into Clinton Avenue, turn left and enter Crescent Terrace. Somehow, as he strode along the footway with an air of elaborate unconcern, his silver-headed ebony stick tucked be-

neath his left elbow, he reminded me of a drum major strutting before a band, and we heard him humming to himself as if he had not a care in the world.

He had almost traversed the three hundred yards of the short half-moon of the Terrace, walking slower and more slowly as he approached Dorondo Street. "Nothin' doin' yet," breathed Dogherty. "I been lookin' like a tomcat at a mouse-hole, an' don't see nothin'—"

"Zat so?" whispered Costello sharply. "If ye'd kape yer eyes on th' street an' not on Dr. de Grandin, maybe ye'd see more than ye have. What's that yonder in th' doorway o' Number 18, I dunno?"

Dogherty, Schmelz and I turned at his sharp question. We had, as he said, been watching Jules de Grandin, not the street behind him. Now, as we shifted our glances, we saw something stirring in the shadow that obscured the doorway of Number 18. At first it seemed to be no more than a chance ray of light beamed into the vestibule by the shifting of a tree-bough between house and street lamp, but as we kept our eyes glued to it we saw that it was a form—a tall, attenuated, skeletally-thin form moving stealthily in the shadow.

SLOWLY the thing emerged from the gloom of the doorway, and despite the warning I had had, I felt a prickling sensation at the back of my neck just above my collar, and a feeling as of sudden chill ran through my forearms. It was tall, as we had been told, fully six feet from its bare-boned feet to hairless, parchment-covered skull, and the articulation of its skeleton could be seen plainly through the leathery skin that clung to the gaunt, staring bones. The nose was large, high-bridged and haughty, like the beak of a falcon or eagle, and the chin was prominent beneath the brownish sheath of skin that stretched drum-tight across it. The eyes were closed and showed only as twin depressions in the skull-like countenance, but the mummified lips had retracted to show a double line of teeth in a mirthless grin. Its movements were irregular and stiff, like the movements of some monstrous mechanical doll or, as Edina Laurace had expressed it, like a marionette worked by unseen wires. But once it had emerged from the doorway it moved with shocking quickness. Jerkily, and with exaggeratedly high knee-action, it crossed the lawn, came to the sidewalk, turned on its parchment-soled feet as if on a pivot, and started after de Grandin.

The luckless bum it had pursued the night before had run from it. De Grandin waited till the scraping of its fleshless feet against the flagstones was almost at his elbow, then wheeled to face it, little round blue eyes ablaze, small teeth showing in a grin as mirthless and menacing as the mummy's own. *"Sa-ha, Monsieur le Cadavre,"* he spoke almost pleasantly, "it seems we meet to try conclusions, *hein?* Monsieur Joe-Louis the Louse you killed, but me you shall not kill. Oh, no!"

Glinting like a flash of silver lightning in the street lamp's glow the blade of his sword came ripped from its sheath, and he fell into guard position.

The mummy paid no more attention to his sword than if it had been a straw. It never faltered in its advance, but pressed upon him, broad-bladed spear raised like an axe. Down came the chopping spear-head, up went de Grandin's rapier, and for a moment steel and spear-haft locked in an impasse. Then nimbly as an eel escaping from a gloved hand the Frenchman's weapon disengaged and he leaped back beyond the reach of the spear.

But the mummy came on relentlessly or, more exactly, insensately, with the utter lack of caution of an automaton. The rapier played lightning-like, weaving glittering patterns in the pale light of the street lamps; de Grandin danced as agilely as the shadow of a wind-blown leaf, avoiding heavy slash and devastating lunge, then closed in quickly as a winking eye, thrusting, stabbing, driving with a blade that seemed more quicksilver than steel. Once, twice, three times we saw his rapier pass clear through the litch, its point emerging four full inches from the leather-skinned back, but for all the effect his thrusts had, he might have been driving a pin into a pincushion.

The mummy could not have weighed much more than fifty pounds, and the little Frenchman's devastating thrusts drove it back on its heels like blows from a fist,

rocking it from perpendicular until it leant at an angle of forty degrees to the earth, but it seemed endowed with devilish equilibrium and righted itself like a gyroscope each time he all but forced it off its balance.

Mais c'est l'enfantillage—this is childishness!" we heard de Grandin pant as we closed in and sought a chance to seize his skeleton-like antagonist. "He who fights an imp of satan as if he were human is a fool!

"Stand back, my friends," he called to us as we approached, "this is my task, and I will finish it, by blue!" He dodged back from the chopping of the mummy's spear, fumbling in his pocket with his left hand, then once more drove in savagely, his rapier slipping past the weapon of his adversary to pierce clear through the bony body.

And as the sword hilt struck against the mummy's ribs and swayed it backward, he thrust forward with his left hand. There was a click, a spurt of sparks, and the blue point of a little cone of flame as the wick of his cigarette lighter kindled.

The tiny blue flame touched the mummy's wrinkled skin, a flickering tongue of yellow fire bloomed like a golden blossom from the point of contact, and in an instant the whole bony, bitumen-smeared body of the litch was ablaze. If it had been composed of oil-soaked cotton waste it could not have caught fire more quickly or blazed more fiercely. The flame licked up its wasted torso, seized greedily upon emaciated limbs, burned scrawny neck and scraggy, parchment-covered head as if they had been tinder. The stiffness went from thigh- and shin-bones as they crumbled into ashes, and the blazing torso fell with a horrifying thud to the flagstones, flame crackling through its dryness.

"*Ha*, that was a trick you had not thought of, *Monsieur le Cadavre!*" De Grandin thrust the tip of his sword into the fast-crumbling remnants of the litch, stirring them as he might have stirred a coal-fire with a poker. "You were invulnerable to my steel, for you had no life in you to be let out with a sword, but fire you could not stand against. Oh, no, my old and very naughty one, you could kill poor Monsieur Joe-Louis the Louse, you could frighten poor Mademoiselle Edina, and wound her most sorely in the shoulder, but me you could not overcome, for Jules de Grandin is one devilish clever fellow and more than a match for all the mummies ever made in Egypt. Yes, certainly; of course!

"And now, my friends," he turned to us, "there is unfinished business on the agendum. Let us have some pointed conversation with this so offensive Monsieur Loftus."

A BRASS knocker hung on the door of Number 18 Crescent Terrace, and de Grandin seized its ring and beat a thunderous tattoo. For some time there was no response, but finally a shuffling step came in the hall, and the door opened a few inches. The man who stared at us was big in every way, tall, broad and thick. His fat cheeks hung down like the dewlaps of a hound, his little mouth was red and full-lipped, like that of a spoiled child or wilful woman, and he stared at us through the thick lenses of rimless spectacles with that expression of vague but vast kindliness which extreme short-sightedness often confers. "Yes?" he asked in a soft oleaginous voice.

"Monsieur Loftus, one assumes?" de Grandin countered.

The man looked at him searchingly. "Oh, so it's you?" he replied. "You're the man who came here today—"

"*Assurément, Monsieur,* and I have returned with these gentlemen of the police. We would speak with you if you can spare us a few minutes. If you find it inconvenient—*eh bien,* we shall speak with you nevertheless."

"With me? About what?"

"Oh, various matters. The matter of the so abominable mummy you endowed with pseudo-life by means of certain charms you learned as a member of *la Société de la Résurrection Esotérique,* by example. Also about the death of Monsieur Joe-Louis the Louse which was occasioned yesternight by that same mummy, and of the attack on Mademoiselle Edina Lurace by your utterly detestable mummy-creature—"

The fat face looking at us underwent sudden transformation. The childish, peevish mouth began to twist convulsively and little streams of saliva dribbled from its corners. "You can't do anything to me!" Loftus ex-

claimed. "I deny everything. I never had a mummy; never raised it from the dead; never sent it out to kill—who would believe you if you tried to bring me into court on such a charge? No judge would listen to you; no jury would convict me—"

"Silence, *cochon!*" cried de Grandin sharply. "Go up the stairs and pack a valise. We take you to the *Bureau de Police* all soon."

The fat man stepped back, looking at him with an almost pitying smile. "If you wish to make a fool of yourself—"

"*Allez vous-en!*" the Frenchman pointed to the stairs. "Go pack your things, or we shall take you as you stand. Your execrable mummy we have burned to ashes. For you the fire of the electric chair awaits. Yes."

As Loftus turned to mount the stairs the little Frenchman whispered to Costello: "He has right, by damn it! He could not be convicted in a modern court of law, especially in this country. We might as well charge him with riding on a broomstick or turning himself into a wolf."

"Be dad, sor, ye've got sumpin there," Costello admitted gloomily. "We seen th' whole thing wid our own ten eyes; we seen ye fight wid it an' finally make a bonfire out o' it, but if we tried to tell it to a judge he'd have all five o' us in th' bughouse quicker'n ye could say 'Scat!' so he would."

"*Précisément.* For that reason I ask that you will go out on the porch and await me. I have a plan."

"I don't see how ye're goin' to work it, sor—"

"It is not necessary that you see, my friend. Indeed, it is far better that you do not. Be swift and do as I say. In a moment he will be among us; then it will be too late."

WE FILED out the door and waited on the little roofless porch before the house. "If this ain't screwy," Dogherty began but got no further, for a sharp cry, half of protest, half of terror, sounded from the house, and we rushed back into the vestibule. The door had swung to behind us and the lock had snapped, so while Costello and Dogherty beat on it Schmelz and I raced to a window.

"We're coming!" I called as Sergeant Schmelz broke the glass, thrust his hand through the opening and undid the lock. "We're coming, de Grandin!"

Costello and Dogherty forced the front door as Schmelz and I broke through the window, and the four of us charged into the hall together. "Howly Mither!" exclaimed Costello. Loftus lay at the foot of the stairs as oddly and grotesquely lifeless as an overstuffed scarecrow. His head was bent at an utterly impossible angle, and his arms and legs splayed out from his gross body, unhinged and nastily limp at knees and elbows.

De Grandin stood above him, and from the expression on his face I could not determine whether laughter fought with weeping or weeping with laughter. "*Je suis desolée*—I am completely desolated, my friends!" he told us. "Just as Monsieur Loftus was about to descend the stairs his foot slipped and he fell heavily. *Hélas,* I feär his neck is broken. Indeed, I am quite sure of it. He are completely dead. Is it not deplorable?"

Costello looked at Jules de Grandin, Jules de Grandin looked at Costello, and nothing moved in either of their faces. "Ye wouldn't 'a' helped him be any chanct, would ye, sor?" the Irishman asked at length.

"Helped him, *mon Lieutenant?* Alas, no. He was below me when he fell. I could not possibly have caught him. It is unfortunate, disastrous, most regrettable—but that is how things are. Yes."

"Yes, sor," Costello answered in a toneless, noncommittal voice. "I had a hunch that's how things would turn out.

"Schmelz, Dogherty, why th' divil are ye standin' there gapin' like ye'd never seen a dead corpse before, an' ye both members o' th' hommyside squad? Git busy, ye omadhauns. Tellyphone th' coroner an' tell him we've a customer for him.

"An' now, sor, what's next?" he asked de Grandin.

"*Eh bien,* my old and rare, what should men do when they have finished a good day's work?"

"Sure, Dr. de Grandin, sor, ye'd never be advisin' that we take a wee dhrap o' th' potheen, would ye?"

They exchanged a long, solemn wink.

Dead Man's Shoes

By STEPHEN GRENDON

Heading by BORIS DOLGOV

WHEN he came to the top of the hill he paused to rest. He put down the basket of morels, shaking them a little so that spores of the mushrooms might fall out and perchance take hold and grow next spring. He stretched. It was a beautiful afternoon in May, and the Midwestern countryside rolled away in low hills, with woods and fields, a green that was neither lush nor yet pale with early growing, but in that middle stage, with blossoms here and there, and the not-long-turned fields black or brown, as the nature of the soil determined it. From all around

To be sure the boots were a trifle tight, but otherwise they seemed all right.

him rose the pungent perfume of bergamotte crushed underfoot where he walked. A peewee sang dulcetly from the deep woods down the farther slope. Far off toward the northern horizon he could just see the river, and a little to the east, a pair of lakes, cobalt under the cloudless sky.

It was such a scene and such a day as Douglas Lynn had often known. Not that it was prosaic; the natural beauty of a May afternoon could never become that. He sat down on a stump and relaxed, and with his act of relaxation something happened to him. It was important to recall to himself later that his thoughts had been only of mushrooms, of the beauty of the earth spread out before his eyes from this hilltop vantage point, of the perfumes of flowers on the wind, and that the sun was warm, and the day warm, with a mild wind blowing out of the West. What happened was in direct contrast, for suddenly, without warning, the scene before his eyes vanished, and he found himself in the midst of a blinding snowstorm; he was conscious of intense cold, and he had the sensation of falling through space. Snow, icy snow, struck into his face, blinding him. For a few moments he seemed to see tall pine trees rising darkly up toward him through the snow, and great drifts of snow below, with dark water flowing out from under ice.

THEN it was over, and all was as before—the sensation of cold, the sight of snow, the pine trees and the flowing water—all were gone; and before his eyes rolled once more the familiar countryside, serene, unchanged, precisely as it was five minutes before, save that a pair of horses drawing a plow across a slope some distance away had advanced halfway through the field. The sensation of snow and cold had been so strong that Lynn unconsciously touched his face to see if it were wet and cold; it was not. He thought that perhaps he had been the victim of a curious kind of functional suspension—perhaps of heart or digestive tract or nerves, and yet he had never felt better, only a little tired, and his pulse was normal.

That was how it began.

It happened twice more during that afternoon, and each time Lynn was keenly aware of a violence of conflict, as between two worlds; each time he felt a bitter cold, with snow driving into his face, he experienced a wonder of falling, a terror of space, the consciousness of something—yes, something malignant toward which he was falling unchecked. After the third time, he retracted his steps rather more hurriedly than he had come, and something had gone out of the afternoon. He was conscious of a curious tension.

"I really felt that cold and snow," he said later, explaining to his wife. "I was falling—just as plainly as I'm sitting now."

Mrs. Lynn spoke somewhat glibly in terms of psychiatry. "That sort of hallucination is rather rare, but not at all out of bounds."

"But the reason, Milly!"

"Oh, who knows? Those things don't need a reason, Doug. They just happen."

"That's a dreadful thought—that things like that can hit a man without warning any day, any time."

"You were relaxed at the time—your mind was open to impressions from outside."

"Ha!" he interrupted her. "And where in the devil would I get an impression like that when the only thing I had in mind was mushrooms?"

"Anyway, you're attaching importance to it—and that's not advisable. Forget about it. It's just something that you imagined or, if you like, something that happened."

Lynn did not forget it, but in a few days' time, he remembered it only as a curious and inexplicable incident. He had cause to think about it even more when he mentioned it casually to Howard Sherman. Sherman had grown unaccountably agitated; he had paled a little, asked one or two sharp questions, and then abruptly changed the subject. In itself, from the usually jolly Sherman, this was fully as curious as the thing that had happened to Lynn on the hill. He said nothing about it to his wife, lest she conclude that what had happened was still preying on his mind.

A week later, following an all night's rain, which was certain to stimulate mushroom growth, Lynn went out again. He took a different route this time, going to examine some old orchards he knew. Or-

chards produced as many morels as oak groves and shady pastures and burnt-over areas.

It was again a fine day, and the orchards did not disappoint him. Mushrooms grew profusely, and he picked steadily during the two hours that remained of the morning. He had had the foresight to bring lunch with him, since he intended to stay out well into the afternoon, and, having completed his search in his second abandoned orchard, he sat down on a fallen tree and began to open his lunch.

In the midst of this mundane occupation, he was once again stricken with that curious and terrible hallucination—the landscape blotted away, the quiet of the noon hour gave way to a tearing, whistling wind, to the rattle and whine of bullets, to sharp cracking, as of shots, to shouting and terror and horror; he was falling again, falling through snow and sleet and icy winds, falling out of dark heaven to the ghostly white earth beneath, among trees brushing at him and the frozen fingers of fear and death reaching up toward him. And hatred, and malignant, violent, frustrated anger! Then, as suddenly as it had come upon him, it was gone—and with it went his appetite for food, and for more of that zestful hunting after mushrooms. He felt suddenly an overwhelming desire to escape the uncertainty of what had happened and take flight into the familiar once more.

The boots he wore seemed tight; his hands tingled. His sandwich lay before him, just as he had unwrapped it. He wrapped it again, resolutely, and stood up. His boots seemed to clasp to his feet and legs, heavy, insistent. What a curious feeling! he thought. Perhaps he had been right after all, when he had hesitated to buy them from Howard Sherman, thinking them a little small. Only the fact that they had been Jack's had decided him. He moved his feet inside the boots, as if to restore circulation, and in a little while the cramped feeling passed.

He went home.

THIS time he did not tell his wife. After all, he had enough mushrooms to account for his being home earlier than he had expected to be. He took a cup of coffee and said he was going upstairs to lie down briefly before getting at the lawn which he had promised to mow late that day.

He lay for some time thinking. He was not satisfied with Milly's "hallucination" explanation. Assuming it was not an hallucination, what did he have? He had something completely, utterly alien. But even something alien, he reflected, must have reason, meaning, a source. He thought about it—the snow, the cold, the sensation of falling, and as he thought, it was borne in upon him that Jack Sherman had been a paratrooper, and the boots he had bought were Jack's, salvaged after Jack's death in action in the Aleutians, and the thing that had happened to him had taken place only when he wore the boots on his expeditions after mushrooms! What an extraordinary chain of thought!

He got up immediately and went downstairs.

"I thought you were resting," said his wife, looking at him over her knitting.

"I was. I was lying there thinking about Jack."

"Jack Sherman?"

"Yes."

"That's funny. So was I?"

"Really? What about?"

"I was just wondering how it was going to turn out over there." She bent her head toward the Sherman house.

"You mean—Howard?"

"Oh, yes. A woman would see that he was keen on Helen, you know. Even before they went into service and Howard came back on a medical and Jack didn't come back at all."

"Will she have him, do you think?"

"Why not?"

"I wondered."

"Helen is practical, I should think. Widows in this war are less likely to find second husbands than at any other similar time."

"I was thinking about his boots," he said.

"Oh, yes. I think that was a good buy. I wonder that Howard sold them—or that Helen let him."

"Howard has a pair of his own, you know."

"That's so."

"About the boots—you see, I was wearing them when that happened to me last week—"

"Oh, that!"

"And again today."

She flashed him a quick, alarmed glance. "Doug, again?"

He nodded mutely.

"Oh, that's bad. Recurrent hallucination. Why don't you stop in and see Dr. Briggs? He's good for that sort of thing."

"Do you think it would help?"

"I most certainly do."

Perhaps, after all, he had been somewhat hasty in groping for an answer. He stopped in to see the psychiatrist and told him everything that had taken place. Dr. Briggs said that he was "frustrated," and very likely did not give his impulses free enough rein. He yearned for "freedom" from the prosaic, and the thing that had happened to him had its roots in a natural rebellion against a job, his marriage—in short, everything that increased his responsibilities in a social rather than a personal sense. "Yield to your impulses a little more often, Mr. Lynn," he advised sagely. He had a hearty laugh about the boots, when Lynn told him. Lynn laughed, too, thinking about it in the white-walled office.

IT TOOK a great deal of inner courage for him to go out after mushrooms again next day. He lost no time; as soon as he came in from the office, he went out into the woods, wearing Jack's boots and his usual outdoors garb. This time he consciously waited for it to happen; he reasoned that if this thing were going to happen to him, it need not be when he was unaware. He relaxed and invited it, as it were.

And it came—everything again—the cold, the snow, the terror; all the horror and rage and the frustrated violence. And something more—a fierce, tearing impulse toward vengeance and death, a terrible compulsion toward retribution! He came out of it cold and clammy with perspiration and staggering. Afterwards, after he had recovered his equilibrium a little, he gathered a few morels and hurried home, lest he be taken unawares—and now he had no wish to be, for he was conscious of a cumulative force in what was happening to him, in this conflict with another, alien world.

He said nothing at all to Milly.

Just the same, next morning Milly said something to him.

"You're thinking about Jack and his boots too much, I'm afraid," she said. "Or something's preying on your mind. You must have had a frightful dream last night?"

"No!"

"You talked. I thought you were awake. It was not pleasant."

"Really?"

"Doug—don't you really remember?"

"Not a thing. Tell me."

"It was about Jack." She was dubious. "I don't know whether I ought to tell you. I don't know where you ever got such an idea into your head."

"I'm sure I can bear up under it."

"You talked to me—as if you were Jack yourself. It gave me duck bumps, Doug—it sounded so—so real! Even though what you said. . . . ! I can't repeat it word for word, but it was as if Jack were trying to tell me he was not shot by that Jap at all, but by someone else."

"That's ridiculous, of course. Howard was there. Howard had gone down from the plane ahead of Jack, you know, and he himself shot the Jap who got Jack."

"I know."

BUT at the office this brief conversation came back to him. He repeated in his thoughts what he had said. "He himself shot the Jap who got Jack." He took that apart and mulled it over. If Howard had come down first and got set, rid of the parachute and everything, what was the Jap doing waiting for Jack? He had not thought of that before. Why had not the Jap shot Howard, and then picked Jack off? It did not seem logical at all that the Jap should stand his ground, wait to shoot Jack, and then be shot in turn by Howard, who had previously landed. If Jack had got down first and Howard afterward. . . . !

Once having formulated the picture, he could not get rid of it. He thought about it all day, maddeningly. Howard had wanted Helen and Jack had got Helen and now Jack was dead and Howard was planning to take his place and—God, what a hellish

circle! What a devil of a maze for a man to get into! What a complex of pulp reading and Class C movies and soap operas!

He decided, irrationally, that it was the boots which were responsible for everything. Perhaps the psychiatrist had been right in one sense—the boots had impressed him unfavorably, probably because they had been taken from a dead man, and this impression, suppressed, had motivated everything which had taken place since. That was not only a distinct possibility, but a sound probability.

Having come to this conclusion, there was only one thing left for Lynn to do. He would return the boots to Howard and ask for his money back.

In the afternoon he went over to Sherman's, carrying the boots in a cardboard box, rehearsing a speech to make to Howard. Helen let him in; she did not know whether Howard was at home, but if Lynn would go into Howard's den, she would look around the house. Lynn followed her docilely, thanked her, and flung himself down on a lounge.

Almost at once he saw Howard's boots just inside the closet door—just like his own—and the sight of them made it possible for him to see himself objectively, as Howard might see him once he began to explain his errand. And then, instantly, an impulsive way out presented itself. Why not simply exchange the boots? Having thought it, the thought became imperative. He acted. In a trice the boots were out of the box and replacing Howard's; and Howard's were in the box. When Howard came, he would say nothing about the boots at all—they were the same size, they had the same appearance, Howard would never notice that an exchange had been made. He would simply pretend that he had come over to ask him to take a hike into the woods.

But Howard was not, after all, at home, as Helen came back to tell him; so he was spared even this.

And when, next day, he went out after morels, wearing Howard's boots, he had a wonderful jaunt in the hills, he collected a heaping basket of mushrooms, and nothing whatsoever untoward happened to him.

"It was all right today," he said to his wife on his return.

"You needed only a little common sense and self-confidence, Doug," she said complacently. "I was just a little worried when you began to talk about Jack's boots as if—well, as if they were haunted or something!"

He was embarrassed briefly because his laughter had such a grotesquely hollow sound.

May flowered into summer, and summer into autumn, and presently snow fell, and nothing at all strange or mysterious happened to Douglas Lynn any more.

The snow reminded Lynn fleetingly of his curious experience of that preceding May—something he could look back upon as utterly strange, a little mystic now, as if it had not really happened after all, but had actually been only a figment of his imagination, as Milly and Dr. Briggs had suggested. The neighborhood began to go out on skiing parties and sleighing jaunts into the hills.

Four days after New Year's, the neighborhood was torn by tragedy. Howard Sherman fell off a cliff and was killed—just a day before his brother's widow planned to announce her engagement to him.

LYNN could not get the thought of Howard's untimely end out of his mind, and when the District Attorney stopped by one day on a social visit and began to talk about Howard, Lynn listened eagerly.

"It was lucky we didn't have to bother Howard. You know, we had a crackpot letter—not anonymous, though; I'll give him that—from some fellow in Seattle, home on furlough, who wrote to tell us there was something strange about Jack Sherman's death, and if Howard was here, to ask him about it. Hell, the plain fact was—he was hinting that Howard had shot his own brother!"

"Oh," said Lynn faintly.

His wife looked over in sudden, anxious curiosity.

"But Jack's death couldn't have been any stranger than Howard's," the District Attorney went on.

"Why?" Lynn asked bluntly.

"Well, I looked over his tracks in the snow. I looked over everything very carefully. I've never seen anything like it. It

was an accident, of course—it couldn't have been anything else; there wasn't another footprint around anywhere, and clear, unbroken snow. But you know, the tracks and the marks on the trees and the indications in the snow toward the edge of the cliff pointed toward something just as clearly as if it had been written there—as if something had pulled him over that cliff, something he couldn't control or fight, because the marks were there of where he tried to hang onto saplings and tree-trunks, and finally where he apparently threw himself flat into the snow—as if to keep himself from being dragged or forced off that cliff. An extraordinary thing! We had to put it down as an accident, of course—not another track, not a sign of another human being for rods and rods around. And yet, for almost the whole distance from the grove at the crest to the cliff's edge, it was just as if he were fighting something he couldn't reach, and trying like a poor damned soul to keep from going over that cliff!"

Lynn swallowed and licked his dry lips. "I know," he said in a husky whisper. "I know just how he felt—with the snow and the cold and the falling. He was wearing the boots—*his* boots!"

"Of course — with the snow and the weather. Just the thing—those paratrooper boots! But what got into Howard no one will ever know, I'm afraid. There was everything to show — broken fingernails, even torn flesh at the fingertips—*that he was trying frantically to get those boots off before he reached the edge of the cliff!*"

"It could have been suicide while of unsound mind," said Milly clearly.

"The boots!" said Lynn in a choked voice.

"Yes, the best," said the District Attorney heartily, putting on his hat. "First chance I get, I'm going to buy a pair like that myself. Second-hand or not—I'm not superstitious about dead men's shoes!"

Another New Arkham House Omnibus . . .

THE HOUSE ON THE BORDERLAND AND OTHER NOVELS

by William Hope Hodgson

FOR the first time between two covers, all four of the famed Hodgson fantastic novels, complete and unabridged! In a book of well over 600 pages, here are THE BOATS OF THE 'GLEN CARRIG', THE HOUSE ON THE BORDERLAND, THE GHOST PIRATES, and THE NIGHT LAND—the biggest book yet published by Arkham House! "Few can equal Hodgson in adumbrating the nearness of nameless forces and monstrous besieging entities . . . or in conveying feelings of the spectral and the abnormal . . .," wrote H. P. Lovecraft. Our printers promise us this book in Spring, 1946. The jacket is by Hannes Bok. ORDER NOW — $5.00

Our 1944 and early 1945 titles are going very fast. This is the last listing for books by Wandrei and Whitehead. Send in your orders without delay if you hope to add these books to your library! And advance-order our coming books NOW!

ARKHAM HOUSE, Sauk City, Wisconsin.

Please send me the following, for which I enclose payment in full:

..... copies of THE HOUSE ON THE BORDERLAND AND OTHER NOVELS, by William Hope Hodgson, at $5.00 (to be sent on publication).
..... copies of THE DOLL AND ONE OTHER, by Algernon Blackwood, at $1.50 (to be sent on publication).
..... copies of THE LURKER AT THE THRESHOLD, by Lovecraft & Derleth, at $2.50.
..... copies of WITCH HOUSE, by Evangeline Walton, at $2.50.
..... copies of SOMETHING NEAR, by August Derleth, at $3.00.
..... copies of THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WAY, by Robert Bloch, at $3.00.
..... copies of GREEN TEA AND OTHER GHOST STORIES, by J. S. Le Fanu, at $3.00.
..... copies of THE HOUNDS OF TINDALOS, by Frank Belknap Long, at $3.00.
..... copies of THE EYE AND THE FINGER, by Donald Wandrei, at $3.00.
..... copies of JUMBEE AND OTHER UNCANNY TALES, by H. S. Whitehead, at $3.00.
..... copies of LOST WORLDS, by Clark Ashton Smith, at $3.00.
..... copies of MARGINALIA, by H. P. Lovecraft, at $3.00.
..... copies of SLEEP NO MORE!, ed. by Derleth, at $2.00.
..... copies of WHO KNOCKS?, ed. by Derleth, at $2.00 (Spring, 1946).
..... copies of "IN RE: SHERLOCK HOLMES," by August Derleth, at $2.50.

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

Chanu

I FIRST saw Chanu across the lobby of the Africa Club in Mabari. Even at a distance there was something cold and feral about him, something that made me afraid. A moment later he saw me, and came across to the chair in which I was sitting.

"You're George Roberts, aren't you?" he asked.

"Ah—yes. Won't you sit down?"

He seated himself beside me with, "I'm Chanu."

Even though Chanu had evidently heard of me, I had never heard of him. But I felt that I should have. I stole a sidewise glance at him, and found nothing to criticize. His clothing was immaculate and proper, his beard carefully van-dyked. Strange little reddish eyes blinked beneath a pink brassiere of lids. His forehead was high and domed, and a heavy ridge protruded over his eyes. Outwardly he might have been a scholar—or an elephant hunter.

But still something deep and insistent within me said that I should be afraid. Had I heeded that voice, or been able to look into the future, I would have strangled Chanu on the spot. But you don't just kill people in the lobby of the Africa Club. You are frostily polite until you find out who their parents were back home, and whether they themselves might be an earl or a count, and while you are waiting this information you invite them to have a drink.

"Will you have a drink?" I asked.

Chanu chuckled, a low and throaty sound that reminded me very strongly of something I had heard before. It was vaguely like a tiny whispering wind that wishes to frolic with a few leaves, and yet doesn't wish to use them harshly. I had heard that sound before, and it had some terrible, almost unreal connotation. Yet, I could not place it. Chanu took a pair of delicate glasses from his pocket and polished them with a perfumed handkerchief. He put them on, and blinked at me with his sunken, bloodshot eyes.

"I cannot drink," he said. "It is against the law."

· Heading by BORIS DOLGOV

BY JIM KJELGAARD

"Against the law?"

"Against my law," he amended. He stared into space and for one brief second, right in the center of the Africa Club, I had a mental image of something that should not be within miles of the place. And again I could not define it. But the rustling leaves were definitely there, and with them was something wild and fierce, and wholly brutal. Involuntarily I shuddered, and I wanted to run. But another thing you don't do in the Africa Club is abandon even an unwanted guest.

"Mr. Roberts," Chanu said, "you have been in Africa a long time. Right?"

"Right. I've been collecting all over the continent for eight years."

"What," Chanu asked, "do you think of the okapi?"

THAT question caught me unawares. I knew, of course, that the okapi is a sort of half-horse half-giraffe discovered by Sir Harry Johnson in the awful, tangled forest of the Semliki. It's like nothing else ever discovered, and certainly other creatures just as weird eventually will be found in the same country. But it is very disconcerting to be asked outright, and seriously, what one thinks of an okapi. Try it on one of your friends.

"Why—what should one think of an okapi?"

"That's right," Chanu agreed. "What should one think of it?"

He took the glasses off his eyes and resumed polishing them with the scented handkerchief. Beneath his cultured face, for one brief second, I had a vision of a snarling mouth and great fangs. But it was like looking at a face half concealed by a pall of mist or a spume of water, and the vision faded. Africa is full of queer things, and I told myself that Chanu was just another in a long line of them.

But at the same time I knew that he was more than that. I did not know exactly what. But—

Africa is full of queer things but the strangest is . . .

"Tell me, Mr. Roberts," he said, "if you have studied the science of genetics."

"Not especially." I was becoming a little angry with his bland, yet somehow overbearing, impertinence. "Ordinarily I just take care of my own affairs."

"Oh," he missed the rebuke and seemed disappointed. "You have missed a great deal, Mr. Roberts. It is a most fascinating study, and yet, most geneticists are fools. They are concerned with their everlasting pedigrees, and this, and that. They ignore the basic truth that strength and beauty are the only desirable factors. They—"

"Good Lord!" I broke in.

Chanu continued as though he had not heard me. "Strength survives and rules, and beauty is the reward of strong things. Lacking strength to protect it, beauty cannot live. Lacking loveliness, strength has no reason to live. The geneticists, and all who wish for a better world, should proceed on that principle if they would be right. Do you ever wonder, Mr. Roberts, what will finally emerge from the welter and hodge-podge about us?"

"No," in spite of myself I was sweating. And an inner voice was still trying to warn me against this man. He was something terrible and twisted, something out of a hellish nightmare. But, when I looked, he was only a scholarly, bearded little person who might have been anything at all. His voice rose to a high, ecstatic pitch.

"I will tell you," he said. "There is a great and wonderful fore-ordained plan that very few of us appreciate or even faintly realize. After the weak and ugly have succumbed, the strong and lovely shall combine to create perfection! Strength, such as that found in the great gorillas! Beauty, such as— Ah-h!"

He leaned forward, his eyes seeming to reflect an unholy light. His mouth was set and taut, and his whole being expressed a devilish, beastly lust. A young woman whose blue dress swirled lightly about her legs, and moulded her lovely form in its clinging embrace, was crossing the floor. Her neck was slender, and an enchanting face was set beneath a wealth of golden curls. The eyes of every man in the lobby were following her.

"Beauty such as that!" Chanu whispered. "A perfect speciment for breeding! Strength and beauty—who knows what a thousand years hence may see on the earth if that young woman were properly mated?"

I was on my feet. Furious anger pulsed through my entire being. Almost overpoweringly, there was upon me the impulse to take Chanu's thick neck in my two hands and squeeze it until his tongue ran purple from his mouth and his wheezing breath marked the escape of his stinking life. But I was still in the Africa Club—and there was something besides that which held me back.

Again I seemed to hear the rustle of leaves, to see snarling, man-beast faces. Again I could not get a clear picture.

"I will thank you!" I snapped, "to leave my wife out of your insane speculations!"

Almost instantly the transformation had again occurred. Gone was all impression of savagery, of rustling leaves, of ferocity. Chanu was only a surprised and humble little man who had spoken out of turn.

"A thousand pardons!" he said. "I hadn't the faintest idea that that lovely girl was your wife!"

I cast lamely about—anybody can make a mistake. "Well— Well— Your apology is accepted."

Chanu rose and bowed elaborately. "I shall see you again, Mr. Roberts. My compliments to your charming wife."

He strode away. Looking after him, I knew that he had sought from me information which I did not have to furnish. At the same time, I had an odd feeling that he had come to the Africa Club on a mission, and that that mission was accomplished.

I JOINED Ann in our rooms. She was seated before a mirror, brushing the lovely hair that crowns her small head. She had taken off the blue dress, and replaced it with a soft robe that revealed all the loveliness beneath. An American, Ann Lawless had come to Africa on a newspaper assignment. The fact that she had charmed every male who came in sight was only a by-product of that assignment. Ann is not coquettish. But she's thistledown on a dance floor, a wonderful conversationalist, and a dream in a bathing suit. Why she chose me is something that I never will under-

stand. But she had been my wife for two months.

As for me— Some people thrill to the touch of a lovely jewel, some rhapsodize over a rare painting, and some just aren't happy unless they can feast their eyes on some musty antique. I had Ann, and she was all I wanted. You could say that we'd been married only two months, and the novelty hadn't worn off. But you'd be absolutely wrong. Between Ann and myself there was something that no time or attrition could ever lessen. With all my heart and soul I believed that we had been truly made for each other, and I was wonderfully happy.

When I entered the room she laid her brush on the dresser and came forward. Her arms stole about my neck. She kissed me. It was not a duty kiss, or something that had to be done for form's sake, but a deep and sincere caress. Ann is as genuine as a tree. It just isn't in her to lie or cheat.

"Who's your friend, darling?" she asked.

"Oh, some crackpot who's been in the bush too long."

"What did he want?"

"He wanted," I said, "to tell me that nobody could imagine the race of super-people who'd be on earth a thousand years from now if you were properly mated."

Ann sniffed. "And what makes him think I'm not properly mated? What's his name?"

"Chanu."

Ann drew back and looked, puzzled, into my eyes. "Chanu?" she inquired.

"That's what I said."

"That's a coincidence," she murmured. "I was supposed to write the story of Chanu when I came to Africa."

"Your material's in the lobby, sweet. All you have to do is corner and question him."

"But you don't understand," she pursed her lips thoughtfully. "The Chanu I'm supposed to write about disappeared a hundred years ago."

"Okay"—Ann was fast teaching me some Americanisms. "Spill the dirt, shirt."

"Squirt," she corrected. "It's more or less of a fairy tale, George. Gregory Chanu, a scholar, came to Africa in 1842. He went into the interior, and was never seen again. Three years later an insane black, the only survivor of the expedition, returned with some incoherent story of a terrific battle. The party had been set upon by natives. Wounded, the black boy had trembled in a thicket while the rest went down. Chanu, swinging a clubbed gun, was the last one on his feet. He killed eleven natives before he finally succumbed.

"But he wasn't quite dead and—well—you know the native superstitions better than I do, George. The chief of the attacking blacks, not wishing such courage to be wasted, opened Chanu's chest and was about to eat his living heart when the blacks, in turn, were attacked by a band of club-swinging gorillas. There was another pitched battle. But, when the gorillas were driven off, a huge male lay across the body of Chanu. Both were thought dead. But their blood had fused in such a way as to impress a perfect rectangle on the earth. Seeing that, the medicine man mumbled incantations over the bodies, and Chanu arose. But he would not leave the gorilla, and when the natives tried to seize and bind him he fell beside it. Then the gorilla arose and— Do you follow me, George?"

"I'm afraid I don't."

"I don't understand all myself. But the two expiring lives had united, and the single powerful life forged from two weak ones was able to will to inhabit the body of either Chanu or the ape. The natives revered both as gods, and maintained them as such in the village. And the life they shared was so strong that only something able to kill the gorilla could kill either. But, of course, when one died, both must. I— W'ell, that's about the whole thing."

"Good Lord! I should think it would be!"

"Of course it's incredible," Ann said. "But Gregory Chanu has never been found and, even if he died of dysentery, there's still a good story in him."

"Well and good, my little news hound. And where is this fantasy supposed to have taken place?"

"Nobody knows. But Gregory Chanu was starting for the Zandel River."

"A-ha! The plot thickens! We may find him, his ape other self, and the worshiping savages!"

"Oh, George! Do you mean—?"

"That's exactly what I mean," I told her—Ann loves safari. "Final instructions just arrived. We go up the Zandel by boat to Charing Falls. From there, we'll pack into the forest. I'm taking a few mules along, and fifty boys."

"Oh, George, wonderful! What a perfectly glorious opportunity to get more stories!"

"Sure. You'll scoop 'em all. We may find—" I grinned. "We may find another okapi even if we can't locate the spirit of Chanu."

FAR up the sluggish Zandel, with its murky, hippopotami-filled pools and its great, man-eating crocodiles, Charing Falls hurls its spume like a giant bridal wreath. But above the falls the river is a reluctant bride. Men, where the waddling hippopotami and lunging crocodiles will let them live in peace, have hewn their plantations on the lower part of the river and built their houses. But above the falls there are no men, or at least none who remain permanently and alive. And it is at Charing where the wedding of the known and the unknown, the civilized and the uncivilized, trembles on the verge of fulfillment.

I was going up partly to map new country and partly to collect specimens. And, in spite of the forbidding character of the wilderness into which we were venturing, I hesitated neither to go nor to take Ann. Kip, my head boy, is a Masai. He had inveigled ten of his brothers and cousins onto my payroll, and with eleven Masai one may go anywhere. Kip had personally chosen all the rest of the porters, and vouched for them.

So, as Ann and I stood hand in hand on the deck of the little river steamer *Crawford,* watching Kip order his men to the unloading, I had neither qualms nor fears. I liked safari as much as Ann did and somehow, in that moment, the sky over the upper part of the river seemed much bluer and softer than that below. It was the old, old call, the lure of the unknown. Ann's fingers twined around mine. She felt it, too, this call to go and see, the urge to find what lay beyond the ranges. More properly, here on the Zandel, we were going beyond the forest. There weren't even ranges that anyone had reported, only some very low hills.

Kip's men laid the luggage out in orderly rows on the river bank, and six of the gleaming, nearly naked blacks returned for the mules. These were big strapping brutes, and a couple of them had evidently devoted their lives to the acquisition of an ugly temper. But with his right hand on the halter of the biggest and meanest, a brindled minion of hell appropriately named Old Nick, Kip half dragged the protesting beast down the gangplank. Then he returned to help with the rest. Blaine, skipper of the *Crawford,* touched me on the shoulder.

"I don't like to hurry you," he said. "But we have got to get down to an anchorage before night."

"Oh, yes. Yes. We'll leave right away."

Together Ann and I walked down the gangplank, and had scarcely stepped from its end when it was hoisted. Still hand in hand, we turned around and Blaine waved at us.

"Good luck!" he yelled. "I'll pick you right up here in six weeks."

"Right. Six weeks."

The little *Crawford* gathered speed, churned down the river, and disappeared behind a curve. Ann's fingers tightened around mine, and when I turned to smile at her, her eyes were shining.

"Isn't it heavenly?" she breathed. "This—This is almost like exploring!"

"It is exploring, sweet," I told her.

"Well— So it is."

Kip and two of his most trusted lieutenants were packing the mules, and I strode forward to assume the white man's burden of telling black men what to do. I didn't have to. But they expected it, and thought the more of me because I did assume the boss' place. I'd already laid out a plan. The few existing maps of the upper Zandel showed an inclined and evidently a natural path up the side of the falls. Above, on the west bank, the river was relatively clear of entangling foliage for some fourteen miles—as far as any man had gone and recorded his journey. Some half day's march from where we were now was a suitable camping place, with water and thorns for a protecting night stockade.

"We march," I told Kip.

Ann and I walked at the head of our column. Behind us came our two personal gunboys, a pair of wizened, scarred savages whom for purposes of easier pronunciation we called Tom and Jerry, and the porters followed them. It was easy enough walking once we'd reached the top, a wide river-side path with no trees and not much grass. But to our left, and across the river, the huge-boled, vine-draped trees rose like so many dark and brooding monsters.

"Isn't it lovely?" Ann asked happily.

"Yes. I—"

I was looking at the trees. There was nothing to be seen except the mighty trunks and the sweeping vines. But, at the same time, I had a strong and wholly irrepressible feeling that something was watching us. Curiously I thought of the bearded little man who had called himself Chanu. Still within my mind was a half-sensed something that existed both here and about his person.

If I had met Chanu in this place, I would have thought that he belonged.

"'I' what?" Ann demanded.

"What was that?"

"You said 'I' and stopped," Ann reminded me. "Finish what you begin."

"Oh, yes. I— Ann, don't you think we'd better turn back?"

"George! We've scarcely started!"

"Well—"

"Oh, don't be an old fuddy-duddy," Ann sniffed. "When we're seventy-five we'll be too old for high adventure."

Reason told me that she was right. Yet, something else told me to turn back now, to get out of here while we were still able to do so. If I had not been educated to the point where I listened to reason——

"You're right," I told her.

"Of course, I'm right! Come on, and think of the grand things we'll see. I'm going to write a whole book about this trip."

"If your picture is on the front cover, darling, it will be a best seller."

"Now you're normal," she admitted. "Turn back indeed! I'm having the time of my life!"

But still there was an insistent, unquenchable little voice within me, and it said, "Turn back now."

IN SPITE of fears, I slept well that night. A thorn stockade surrounded our camp, fires leaped all about, and Kip and his Masai personally assumed sentry duty. Nothing could possibly break through and harm us. Yet, until Ann pillowed her sleepy head on my shoulder and snuggled up beside me, my uneasiness had mounted. Afterwards, I think that nothing could have disturbed me. There is a peace and serenity about Ann that is contagious. She has confidence in herself. That transmitted to me, and I slept to awaken in the first cold light of early morning. Kip, my double-barrelled Hollands under his arm, stood before our tent and I gave him my usual morning salute,

"Was all well?"

"All is well."

He had used the present tense, not the past, and all had not been well while we slept. Kip turned towards me. There is no fear in a Masai, but plainly he was concerned, Keeping his voice pitched low, so Ann couldn't hear, he said:

"There was something out there."

"What was it?"

"I do not know," his brow was wrinkled. "It swung through the trees, and crossed the river on a log. Almost to the camp it came. But, when I would have shot it, it was no longer there. It was a huge and hairy thing, and it walked upright."

"Was it a gorilla?"

Kip shook his head. "No. It was not a gorilla."

"A man?"

"No. It was not a man."

What was it?"

"I do not know."

We went onto the grassy river bank to search for tracks of the thing that might have invaded our camp. But the grass, very thick and springy, held no tracks that even Kip could discern. If he failed, it was hopeless for me to look.

"Was it a dangerous thing?" I asked.

"I do not know," Kip's face was still puzzled.

I looked towards the tent where Ann was still sleeping, and gazed down the river. The sun burst into the sky and burned away the morning mists. And, for some reason, the instinctive, warning voice of last night was silent. There were new and unknown things

up here—Kip did not tell fairy tales. And part of the reason for my presence above the falls was to find new things. We had an impregnable fort, a strong force, should easily repel the attacks of anything that this brooding forest might produce. We would go on.

"Say nothing about it," I counselled. "If it comes again, try to shoot or capture it."

"Yes," Kip said simply.

Ann came out of the tent, fresh and radiant at the morning itself. Even jodhpurs could not hide the grace and slimness of her lithe limbs, nor did the man's shirt conceal the delicate roundness of her upper body. I think that clothing has never been designed so coarse and rough that her beauty would fail to shine through it.

"Good morning, George," she called gaily. "Do you still want to turn back?"

"You're dreaming! Who said anything about turning back?"

Ann smiled. "I must have been dreaming," she said cheerfully. "Oh, George, it's so beautiful up here that I wonder if we didn't stumble onto some fairyland by mistake."

"You'll find out you didn't when the flies start in," I teased. "They won't bother me because no fly in its right senses would bite anything else while you're around."

"Thank you, kind sir, she said." Ann made a little curtsey and washed in the tin basin of water that our personal tent-boy brought her.

Gathered around their fire, the rest of the boys were feasting on provisions we'd carried along. I'd have to shoot a buck today, or get other fresh meat. It didn't matter what because an African boy isn't very particular as to what he eats. Tethered outside the stockade since daylight, the mules were cropping the rich river grass.

IT WAS about mid-day when we reached the farthest part of the river that was marked by any map, and here the character of the place changed abruptly. The great, sky-probing trees gave way to smaller and scattered forest growth. Lush green grass carpeted the open spaces, and tiny, fox-size antelope bounded back and forth. It was a scene right out of Hans Christian Anderson, and almost involuntarily I found myself looking for the fairies that should grace it. As though she had read my thoughts, Ann said:

"The antelope will have to do. They look like fairies."

I grinned, and was about to reply when a shouted order made me turn. Kip was running through the grass, trying to head off the bolting mules. Just beyond, the point to which they were bolting, the grass grew especially lush and green over a sort of rock formation, and Old Nick had decided to sample it. I don't know how mules communicate their thoughts. But evidently the big brindled beast was the ringleader of this stampede, and had invited his comrades to go with him.

Suddenly, Old Nick reared. But, before he was halfway up, as suddenly and swiftly as though he had received a shot in the brain, he fell to the earth. Another mule screamed, and the scream was choked in the middle as it, too, sprawled forward. The other four tried to run, took one or two jerky steps, and went down. I saw something in the grass at their feet, something sinuous and whip-like, a squirming, hideous something that struck viciously at one of the dead mules.

"Keep away!" I warned Kip.

"I see," he said calmly.

Tom passed the light rifle into my hands, and Ann trembled beside me as we slowly retraced our steps towards the mules. The earth about them was alive with snakes, scaley, monstrous-headed things with gaping white mouths and club-like tails. One reared, spread a hood, and hissed at us. About two feet long, they were similar to the rhingals. But they were not rhingals, but something far more deadly. From the time the first one struck, it had taken less than a second to kill the six mules. Ann shuddered, and put her hands to her motuh.

"Oh how ugly! Come away from them!"

"I need one for my collection."

"Come away! Please! George, I'm going to be sick!"

Walking very gingerly, his eyes glued to the earth before him, Kip came to my side and took the gun. He grinned, and began shooting the snakes that clustered around the dead mules—their packs had to be rescued. But before I led Ann away, Kip

flashed me a fleeting, sidewise glance that in itself spoke volumes.

"Do you still think it's a fairyland?" I asked Ann.

"Take the bitter with the sweet," she said grimly. "George, those poor mules!"

We waited in a little open glade, looking towards a thick growth of trees through which we would have to pass, and listened to the 'snap-snap' of the little gun as Kip killed the snakes. The gun became silent, and I looked around to see the boys dividing the mules' packs. They shouldered them, a grinning, sinuous line, and Kip handed the gun back to the bearer. Again Ann and I took the lead, starting straight through the thick trees.

The scream that rang out from the end of the porter's line was so shriekingly bloody and so coldly despairing that I missed my first grab for the heavy gun. Turning around, I saw a pair of hairy arms seize Kip and tear his head off. Behind the arms loomed a mighty furry body, and an evilly grinning face. Almost at the same second Ann was snatched from my side into a tree. Mercifully, she had either been knocked unconscious or she had fainted.

Then everything went black.

THE first thing I thought of when I awakened was Chanu. I don't know why. My head was throbbing, there was a thick, nauseous taste in my mouth, and when I tried to lift my arms all strength seemed to have departed. But still, before me, danced the scholarly, bearded face of the little man whom I had met in the lobby of the Africa Club. Then the vision faded, and I regained complete consciousness to look squarely at a black and hideous ape.

I blinked, doubting my eyes and my own sanity. But when I looked again the ape was still there, and now I saw that it was confined in a wooden cage. Eighteen grinning white skulls adorned the eighteen upright bars of the cage. Apparently asleep, one of the ape's clumsy, short-thumbed hands were outstretched on his enormous thigh. His neckless head was slumped on his mighty chest. I had seen gorillas, had broken through a trackless, bush-strewn little stretch of jungle and come upon them feeding. I had heard them beating their chest, and their roars of rage when they fought. I had watched an old male seize a boy by either leg and tear him in half. But I had never seen any ape, or anything else, that for sheer brutality and strength compared to the thing in the cage.

Had he stood erect, he would have been more than six feet tall. But it was the massiveness of his body, the mighty muscles that bulged on his chest and in his tremendous arms, that were most impressive. The gorilla equalled the weight of five big men. And it was easy, looking at him, to believe that such beasts had taken clubs and beaten even elephants to death. The captive gorilla was the personification of uncontrolled and mighty power. And, as I looked, I saw him come awake.

By infinitesimally slow degrees he raised his fanged head. I shuddered, and looked away. The head was a small thing on so huge a torso, a little, weaving bubble that seemed almost ridiculously out of place. The gorilla rose on his legs and forearms, waddled almost lazily to the side of his cage, and drew himself erect. His piggish little sunken eyes blazed in his ridged forehead. But right at that moment, for some reason, they seemed devoid of all brutality. There was a passion in them, a deep and yearning lust that was almost human.

Again, at that moment, there rose before me the vision of Chanu. I saw the scholarly little man as he sat beside me in the lobby of the Africa Club, and it was as though his face mingled with that of the gorilla. But once more it was like looking at a face half hidden by a pall of mist or a spume of water. He stood behind the ape, spouting crazy, half truths about genetics and the turmoil of life within the world. I heard his spoken words, "Beauty such as that! A perfect specimen for breeding. Strength and beauty—who knows what a thousand years hence may see on the face of the earth if that young woman were properly mated?"

I wanted to keep my eyes closed, to battle with the horrible dream that was engaging my mind and awaken with Ann's head cosily pillowed on my shoulder. But some inexorable and mighty force that I could not combat forced me to look again. I saw the ape's yearning, unholy countenance, followed his gaze, and tried to tell myself that I would

not see that which was going to meet my eyes. It was a horrible, unreal dream. It could not be. But Ann was there!

Trussed to a post, her long, round arms were bound behind her. Her head was up, and there was no hint of panic in her blue eyes. Apparently she was unharmed.

My dull, feverish eyes roved beyond my wife. A row of conical, thatched huts rose among the low trees. Beside them, stacked in an orderly row, were all the boxes and parcels that the porters had carried. My life had been spent collecting and I suppose it's only natural that, even now, I should first seek the specimen boxes. Automatically I selected those which had been personally carried by Kip.

"If that young woman were properly mated—" Through the haze that clouded my mind Chanu was again there, speaking to me in the lobby of the Africa Club and following my wife with avid, lustful eyes. Chanu wanted Ann. But Chanu was the huge gorilla in the cage of the eighteen bars and the eighteen skulls. Ann raised her head, looked towards the huts, and it was then that I saw the blacks approaching.

THEY were tall men, big-boned and muscular, and sweat shone like satin on their rippling bodies. They bore shields of rhinoceros skin, carried long-hafted spears with cruelly pointed tips. Except for their gear, which was strange to me, they might have been Masai. In solemn procession they filed towards me, and with heads averted passed Ann. One nudged me with his foot, and spoke in a variation of the Masai dialect.

"You have awakened."

Almost automatically I answered, "I have awakened."

"It is good," the black said simply. "M'gungu will be pleased."

A pair of blacks reached down to grasp me by the arms and lift me to my feet. I stumbled forward, and would have fallen, had not they upheld me. The blacks half-dragged me to Ann, and untied her. Her soft arms passed around my neck. I looked at her eyes, saw a great compassion and pity there, but still no fear.

"I—," I began.

But I was drowned out by a mighty bellow from the ape. He began to beat his huge chest with his mighty arms. Slaver dripped from his jaws. He paced up and down the cage, and flung himself against the bars. My arms went around Ann, as though to shield her from the awful thing in the cage. The gorilla beat his chest harder and faster. Rolling, drum-like echoes came back to mock me. The black pulled me away.

"It is good," he said. "M'gungu will now take his mate."

"His what?" I demanded.

"His mate," the black said calmly. "M'gungu has never had a mate, and he might kill this one had he not seen with his own eyes that another male desired her."

"George," Ann said desperately, "what are they going to do?"

I looked at the huge ape, thought of my own bruised and almost helpless self. But, even had I been unhurt and strong, the gorilla could have ripped me to shreds in a second. The whole hellish scheme became apparent. The blacks had deliberately taken me to Ann in order to incite the jealousy of the thing in the cage. He recognized me as Ann's mate, and when he killed me he would take her for himself.

"Beauty such as that," I remembered. "A perfect specimen for breeding. Strength and beauty—"

Again, behind the gorilla's mask of hate, rose the scholarly, ascetic face of Chanu. He was not here. Yet he seemed to be here. I thought of Ann's fable—one life that could inhabit either a man or a gorilla. That was obviously absurd. But still, Chanu's face seemed to be mistily hovering behind that of the gorilla.

"George, what are they going to do?" Ann pleaded.

I looked at her, saw all the softness and glory of the beautiful girl I had married, and glanced from her to the raging M'gungu. And, in that moment, I knew that if I had a knife, spear, or any weapon, I would have left Ann lifeless at the foot of the post. But I had nothing, could do nothing except ask an inane, "And must I fight M'gungu without weapons?"

"Choose any weapon," the imperturbable black said, "except a gun."

"What if I defeat him?"

"Then," the black's face did not change, "you have a warrior's promise that you, your

goods, and your woman, shall be returned to the place where M'gungu ordered his people to capture you."

"What's going to happen?" Ann begged.

"I am going to fight the gorilla," I said. "You're the prize."

"Oh, no," she pleaded. "Not that! George, leave me! Get away and let them have me!"

As coldly as I could I turned my back on her and walked away. I stumbled to the specimen boxes, selected one by the number, and my numbed hands nearly dropped it into the grass. But it was only a little box, twenty inches long by sixteen high.

"I am ready," I said.

The black man looked, cynically amused, at the puny weapon. With a tall black supporting either arm, I was guided down to the cage that housed the huge gorilla. M'gungu retreated to the far end, beating his hands against his chest as a challenge to battle. The blacks opened the door of the cage, shoved me inside, and stepped back. Walking on his feet and the knuckles of his hands, M'gungu advanced in a slow and terrifying walk. My hand was on the spring cover of the little box. At the proper moment I opened it, flung its contents halfway across the cage.

M'gungu straightened, and a fleeting look of horrible agony crossed his reddish little eyes. He threw himself forward, one huge hand brushed my chest and sent me sprawling. Slowly, like a deflating toy balloon, M'gungu collapsed at my feet. Kip, an understanding man, had done his work well. Noting Ann's terror, he had waited until we were gone, then had captured one of the mule-slaying serpents for me. The snake slithered on the fallen gorilla, hissing.

But again the awed blacks were at the cage door, and I fell into their arms when they opened it. Reeling between them, I watched them pick up Ann—who had fallen at the foot of the post—and take both of us towards the huts. They carried Ann and guided me into one, and dimly I was aware of the man lying on the pallet.

It was Chanu. But it could not be Chanu. The man on the pallet had been dead for years. When I touched his taut, wrinkled face, it crumbled dustily under the pressure of my finger. Groggily I felt about him, transferred something from his hand to my own pocket.

Once more I lapsed into unconsciousness.

WHEN I awakened it was to hear the roar of the river. I was lying in my own tent and dimly, over me, I saw Ann's pale, worried face. I tried to smile, and she fell, crying, into my arms.

"George!" she sobbed. "Thank God, you're all right!"

"I— Uh— Of course."

The tent flaps rustled and a man entered. It was Gam, another Masai, and Kip's trusted lieutenant.

"You may kill me if you like," he said. "But we fought the gorilla people as best we could. We were driven by them to another part of the forest, and fought six hours before we could return."

"You fought well," I said. "Know no shame. We shall start immediately back to the falls, and when we come again we shall have more armed men."

"We shall do that," Gam echoed.

On silent feet he left the tent, and again Ann bent over me. Her face was pale, and heavy circles were etched beneath both eyes.

"George, dearest," she said. "You were right. We should have turned back when you wanted to. But who would have thought that gorillas might attack us?"

"Nobody," I reassured her. "We'll go back down the river, and come again prepared to deal with them."

Ann shuddered. "O-oh! I think I never want to come back. George, when those terrible things attacked, and I fainted, I had the most horrible dream! I dreamed that we were both taken to a native camp, and that you had to fight a huge gorilla that wanted—— Oh, I'll never forget it!"

"Yes, you will," I soothed.

But, all the while I was trying to comfort Ann, my right hand was desperately working to claw a hole in the dirt floor of our tent and bury something. It was something that had unreal and terrible associations, something that I did not dare look at.

But, even by the feel and scent, I knew that I could not possibly mistake the perfumed handkerchief with which Chanu had polished his glasses back in the lobby of the Africa Club.

The Jonah

You'd expect the sole survivor of a gruesome sea tragedy to be close-mouthed—but you'd never guess why!

DOES the crash of thunder and the zigzag streak of lightning across a storm-flayed sky send you cowering into the furthest cellars? It does me—and for good reason. . . .

I was the sole survivor of the *Bonheur*, the ill-starred and badly named little tramp steamer which perished in North Atlantic waters some fifteen years ago. You will recall how the newspapers termed it "a sea

BY EMIL PETAJA

Heading by A. R. TILBURNE

mystery to rank with the *Marie Celeste*," rehashing the oft-told tale about how that vessel sailed into harbor in perfect condition, but minus its human cargo, as if every living soul on it had been snatched off the face of the earth.

The derelict *Bonheur* was sighted by a coast guard off the Ungava shore, but hardly in perfect condition. It gave the appearance of having been battered about by gigantic, playful hands. The most curious fact—and this was what coupled its unguessed-at tragedy with that of the *Marie Celeste*—was that no single body was to be found on board, neither living nor dead.

A life boat was picked up at sea, drifting at will, with a wreck of a man in it. He was, from his sodden but readable papers, identified as one Peter Drang, a mathematics teacher from North Falls, Idaho. All but dead, he could do nothing but babble wild incoherencies.

AN enterprising newshawk discovered that Drang had shipped as the sole passenger on the *Bonheur*, from Bergen, Norway, months before. As the only living man who could solve the mystery of the *Bonheur*. Drang was hounded unmercifully by newspapermen, after he was released from a New York hospital. But Drang refused to talk. He would say nothing of his experiences, even became violent on several occasions.

How did it happen, they asked, that he —a timid, small, scholarly man in his late thirties, whose heavy glasses and nervous mannerisms indicated anything but a robust, swashbuckling character—should contrive to escape the doom that had obviously overtaken the hard-bitten horny-handed ship's crew?

Peter Drang said nothing, and as soon as he was able returned to Idaho to resume his prosaic life as an algebra instructor in a small town high school.

As you have guessed by now, I am that Peter Drang. I alone survived the *Bonheur* disaster, and now it pleases me to present, for the first time, the truth behind the "mystery of the *Bonheur*," under the guise of fiction. I do not expect to be believed. I do not *want* to be believed.

But now, to begin my story. . . .

This sheltering green Idaho valley, many miles from the ocean, gave me birth. But my earliest childhood memories are all curiously tangled up with a powerful, strange longing for the sea.

But my odd, inborn impulse was many years in awaiting fulfilment. When my father was struck by lightning, during a terrific summer storm, on one of his frequent rambling foot-journeys, it was left to me to care for my invalid mother. I found myself trapped in this prosaic teacher's job —far from the calling sea.

When my mother died I decided to take a long holiday. The money I had painstakingly saved was sufficient for a six months' trip to Europe, where I spent a good deal of my time delving into the lives of my antecedents. Geneology was my hobby, and in my case it was necessary to journey across half of Europe to unravel the tangled skeins of my mingled ancestry. It was in a small Norwegian village that I came upon some odd facts, and it was here too that I suffered a painful shoulder injury which was complicated by a ghastly return of an old nerve complaint.

The doctor in Bergen told me this nerve illness was brought about by over-exertion. For weeks I lay in a raging fever, plagued by hideous dreams, but then at last it was over.

It left me weak and enervated. My mind, which had always been sharp and precise, became foggy and confused. I found it difficult to remember things, and had lost all interest in geneology. My shoulder gave me considerable pain, so I kept it tightly bandaged, and that helped.

Most of all, I was possessed with a deep longing for home. I decided not to go back to London, but to return on the first boat leaving Bergen. And that boat was the little *Bonheur*.

WE WERE three days out. The engines had begun to give trouble, and to make matters worse, the Captain was taken ill and confined to quarters. I myself had been under the weather, kept to my cabin, and the only crew member I'd talked with was Flann O'Shea, the Irish lad who brought me my meals. He was a handsome chap, with curly auburn hair and lively

brown eyes, and I found him to be very intelligent and filled with Irish wit.

"How is it today?" I inquired, over my breakfast tray.

"Smooth as a baby's hand, sir," he grinned. "But the sky's dull and strange. Looks like it looked off Tahiti just before the typhoon."

"I think I'll chance a turn around the deck," I smiled.

I found it to be as he said. Sea and sky blended in an ominous slate grey hue, and the glassy appearance of the water had a forbidding look.

In my stroll I passed one of the crew, wearing the usual striped dark sweater and wide-bottom dungarees, but with something unusual about him. He was a small man, with a sombre, stony face staring out to sea, and his knotty fingers clenched the rail tightly.

"Good morning," I offered.

He didn't so much as bat an eyelash.

"Do you think we'll—" I tried again.

"No use talking to Suva," a deep voice behind me broke in. "He won't answer you."

IT WAS big First Mate Carl Jorgsen, and he was puffing on his curved pipe, as he had been that day when I signed up as the *Bonheur's* only passenger. His creased leathery cheeks and black beard, and intensely blue eyes, suggested somehow that here was a man who had followed the sea all his life—that it was in his blood, and that he would die aboard ship and be buried in it.

He sauntered along with me in silence, for a time, then I asked, "Why won't he answer me?"

"Martin Suva's a deaf-mute."

"Oh." I nodded, feeling a little foolish. I knew the crew considered me a landlubber of the most useless specie, and I felt uneasy about displaying my vast ignorance of maritime matters. "I—I suppose that makes it rather difficult," I ventured.

Jorgsen's eyes gleamed out, and his jaw went out, as if I'd touched on a sore spot.

"That's not the half of it. If I'd had my way Suva wouldn't be here now—or ever."

"Why?" I asked. "Don't the men like him?"

"No," he replied succinctly, and moved swiftly away down the deck.

My curiosity was aroused. Martin Suva. A deaf-mute. He looked harmless enough. Surely that was no reason to band against him. I felt a wave of sympathy for him as I watched him covertly. Imagine the desolation of it—cut off forever from normal contact with his fellow-beings; a shunned, miserable derelict.

I sought out Flann O'Shea about his duties, and questioned him about Suva.

"Sure and Suva's as good a worker as any man on this old tub. Strange? Well, you might say so. Not bein' able to talk and all, naturally the men leave him pretty much to himself. I try and sound him out sometimes, but don't have much luck. He's shy of us all. Then, too, he's a Finn."

"So what?" I blurted, in great surprise. I'd met many Finnish people, both in Europe and back in Idaho, and had been very favorably impressed with their friendliness and their scrupulous honesty.

"Don't you know?"

"No!"

Flann smiled wryly. "Understand, I don't necessarily hold with any of it. Still, I *have* heard a lot of stories. . . ."

"What on earth are you talking about?" I exclaimed, bursting with curiosity.

"It's all the old tales sailors tell about Finns. How they are a race of magicians and warlocks. How they can sing up a storm any time they've a mind to. Why, back in the old sailing days you'd be hard put to find a captain who would sign up a Finn—or a crew who would tolerate having him aboard!"

"Ridiculous!" I cried. "Superstitious nonsense!"

"Maybe. . . ." Flann shrugged and went on with his work.

Back on deck, I leaned on the rail, and thought all this over in my mind. So that was why the crew disliked Martin Suva!

THEN I remembered what I had read about the Finns, as a "mystery race." Their language, their legends, their physical characteristics—utterly different from those of their Scandinavian neighbors. Conjecture as to their origin has run rampant, in fact, is still under dispute. Some students claim

that there is an ancient thread of connection with the Magyars, but this has scant proof. A subtle and highly intelligent people, as evidenced by their great architecture and important music, their civilization springs from an unknown "Land Of Heroes"—and their legends tell of mighty magicians who possessed vast power, were able to sing things into existence, and control the elements.

My imagination went a step further. Suppose certain members of the Finnish race *still remembered* these ancient songs of magic—and with them were able to control the sea, the wind, the storm. . . .

This reverie was shattered by the sound of weird, tuneless keening. The sky was dark and sulphurous, now, and a low, sibilant wind was stirring the jet sea. I whirled sharply to see where the weird singing came from.

It came from Martin Suva, the Finn. He stood motionless, facing the north, and there was something of a worshipper of elemental things in his attitude, as he sang a soft, wordless chant which blended curiously with the sudden wind. I shivered.

"PETER! *Get up!*"

It was Flann O'Shea. He was quite drenched, and he was shaking me in great excitement. The ship pitched and rolled under his feet, and it was a wonder I hadn't been flung awake before now. Probably the tablets the Bergen doctor gave me for my nerves were the answer.

"What is it?" I cried sleepily.

"Trouble!" he shouted back, for the wind was like a thousand banshees. "Engines have gone bad. We're off course! Icebergs! Get dressed, and on deck at once!"

HE DISAPPEARED like a phantom, and I hurriedly scrambled into my clothes and staggered on deck as best I could, donning a life jacket as I went.

First Mate Jorgsen was shouting orders through cupped hands to the deck crew, who labored like slickered shadows under the death-black sky.

The snarling wind knocked the breath out of me, flung me back against the cabin door.

I wanted to help, but knew I would only be in the way, so I stood by, watching with wide eyes. Within five minutes I was soaked to the bone.

Icebergs. . . . We were in northern waters, and the storm had catapulted us far off our course. I fully realized the great danger, with submerged icebergs lurking in wait, and the engines out of commission.

The night crept on, filled with terror. I helped Flann the best I was able, and that kept me from thinking. It finally seemed as though the sun had forgotten to rise or —as if the ravening storm had driven us clear off the face of the earth, into some sinister other dimension. There are times when I think it *did!*

Then we sighted the iceberg. It loomed ahead, cragged and white and terrifying. Under the impetus of the merciless wind, the little *Bonheur* was driven straight toward it. In the engine room men had been working like demons, and, just when all seemed lost, the heave of the engines sent hope flooding through our half-frozen veins.

With the engines working, the *Bonheur* was diverted from this icy doom. Then the wind subsided a little, and faint streaks of dawn caressed the eastern horizon.

Jorgsen gathered the deck crew about him, and thanked them briefly but sincerely for their herculean efforts. I noticed Martin Suva standing by the rail, as he had earlier. He was staring northward and howling in a low, unnatural voice.

Then *they* came.

They came swathed in great purple-black clouds from out the north. Formless at first, like swift-rolling thunderheads, then they couched down in a sinister fashion against the black, choppy swells. The wind sobbed itself down to a whisper.

"What are they?" one of the men demanded.

"I don't know," Jorgsen cried grimly. "But I know who brought them."

He made a move toward Suva, who stood transfixed, staring at the weird phenomenon. Flann stopped him.

"It's only clouds, sir. Can't hurt us."

The silence that followed was shattered by the sound of cackling laughter—shrill, sardonic, and wholly alien. It came from the unnatural bank of purple-black clouds.

One of the men began to pray.

Suddenly the clouds broke. A roaring rush of ice-cold wind hurtled out at us. There was yelling and screaming among the men, then a scramble for the life boats. There was no semblance of order, now. No attempt to save the ship. Only panic, and sheer unbridled fear. We had all *seen*—and we knew there was no hope.

How shall I describe *them?* Like giant women in the wind, with long streaming ice-blue hair, with terrible, white, beautiful faces. Lightning seemed to flash from their fierce bright eyes, and the gleeful cackle of their laughter was like unholy thunder.

I had the brief, tacit knowledge that their intention was to destroy us as a child might playfully destroy his dolls. They were elemental beings—creatures who belonged to the storm because they were a part of it, visible to us now under some special circumstance.

All this was born in my tormented mind as I crawled painfully against the brutal wind, in a futile attempt to reach the remaining life boat. Then suddenly a catastrophic wave leaped up and swept me out into the freezing ocean, and consciousness left me.

I SHIVERED, coughed, then opened my eyes to find that I lay in the bottom of a life boat. Someone was forcing a fiery liquid between my shivering lips.

It was Martin Suva.

I drank, and the fiercely burning liquor helped. I lifted myself up on one elbow and looked about me. I saw Flann smiling at me encouragingly. And Jorgsen. That was all. And I was wearing Suva's dry coat over my shoulders.

"Are you all right?" Flann asked. "We thought sure you were a goner when we fished you out."

I felt my injured shoulder gingerly. It ached a little, and the bandage was gone. Otherwise I was all in one piece.

Suva offered me food, and as I ate I noticed that the sun was directly overhead. I'd been out a long time.

"The others?" I asked.

"All dead," Jorgsen said bitterly. "The *stürm-frauen* got them all!"

I turned to Flann appealingly.

"That's what they're called in old legends," he told me. "Storm-wives. Some kind of elemental spirits who can't make themselves seen or felt unless—"

"Unless—what?"

Flann sighed.

"Unless there's a jonah on board. The legends say that in the old days certain humans made unholy pacts with these elementals. In return for certain favors the *stürm-frauen* are able to show themselves when there is a jonah on board ship; and they will never harm anyone who bears the mark of the jonah. . . ."

The mark of the jonah.

Preposterous, my mathematical mind insisted. And yet—I had seen.

It was toward evening, after our frugal meal of hard tack and tinned fish, that Jorgsen went berserk.

He went after Martin Suva with his strong, hairy hands, and would have choked the life out of him had not Flann and I pulled him off.

"Let me kill him!" he panted eagerly. "Let me destroy the dirty jonah!"

"No," Flann gritted. "We can't be sure."

"Don't you understand?" he blared out. "Don't you realize why we were saved, when all the others were taken? It's because of him—the jonah!"

"Maybe what we saw was an illusion," I said weakly. "Like St. Elmo's fire, or something. The storm and all. We were overwrought and—"

"Why you poor over-educated idiot!" Jorgsen raged. "You think because you've never read of such things in books they don't exist. Just wait and see, that's all. Wait and see!"

That night Carl Jorgsen vanished.

I GROANED in the grip of nightmare, when Flann's hand on my shoulder wakened me. It was hardly light enough to see yet. Martin Suva lay in exhausted slumber—or so it seemed—at the other end of the boat.

"Jorgsen's gone," Flann said, in a dry hollow whisper.

"Gone?" I blinked.

"See for yourself."

I stared in bewildered amazement. It was as the boy said.

"But *how?*" I protested. "I heard nothing!"

"Nor I. But they came in the night and took him. . . ."

There was no other explanation, and later, after a frugal breakfast and a few sips of precious water, we decided to question Martin Suva. Surely if what Jorgsen had believed was true, the Finn would betray himself.

I wrote our questions, then handed him the paper and pencil, to scribble his answers. From the books Flann had seen in Suva's gear, he was sure Suva understood English.

"Do you believe the *stürm-frauen* legend?" I wrote.

Laboriously he wrote, *Yes.*

"Have you seen them before?"

Yes.

"Where do they come from?"

From somewhere else.

"Do they hate men?"

No. They only love to destroy.

I glanced over at Flann. I had been beating around the bush, and he knew it. He nodded grimly, and I wrote, "Did you call the *stürm-frauen?*"

No.

"Did you kill Jorgsen?"

No.

We gave up. It was natural that he would lie, if he had stealthily slain Jorgsen as he slept—it was more than possible—but his answer was given so unhesitantly that I was almost inclined to believe him. Perhaps the *stürm-frauen* did exist, were able to manifest themselves during peculiar storms, did murder the ship's crew in the midst of their lustful sadistic revels. As for the rest of it—we had nothing to convince us that Suva was responsible, aside from the fact that he was a deaf-mute, was Finnish, and made weird noises when he thought no one was about. . . .

WE DETERMINED to take turns sleeping, and the watcher was to waken the others at the slightest hint of trouble. Flann's turn was first, and when he wakened me, I pulled Suva's coat about me against the rising wind, and settled down to scan the dark sea for any signs of lurking terror.

The sky, although clearer than on previous nights, was still draped with great scudding clouds, through which I could occasionally glimpse small patches of white stars. The sea was ink-black.

My mind wandered over the hopelessness of our plight. Lost at sea, thousands of miles from any trafficked sea-lane; what difference would it make who got us—the *stürm-frauen,* or the ocean?

The wind sang a sibilant song. Under its influence I became drowsier and drowsier. Finally I must have dropped off. I was startled by Flann's shrill boyish scream.

I leaped to my feet, then stood frozen. Flann was writhing helplessly in the embrace of something I couldn't quite see. Then, in a naked flash of lightning, Flann was torn from the boat into the air, and I saw *her.*

Her maenadic hair whipping behind her in the singing wind, her eyes glowing down with fierce satisfaction at the boy in her embrace. . . .

Flann screamed in terror as his fists beat against her voluptuous breasts. She crushed him in her arms with savage delight.

His last shrill plea, *"Peter! Help!"* shocked me out of my horror-hypnosis. I sprang forward to slash out at the storm-thing. But she evaded my feeble attempts easily, then, laughing in a manner that turned my spine to ice, she drifted off into the north sky, Flann still writhing impotently in her sadistic embrace.

I fell sobbing to the bottom of the boat. Now I knew. Now all doubt was gone. The presence of Suva, the jonah, had enabled the *stürm-frauen* to appear and to destroy, and their storm-lust would not be sated until all but the jonah were dead. Tomorrow they would come for me. . . .

THE night was alive with fear. Every sound the wind made played on my sick nerves as a fiddle bow plays on a taut E-string. The slapping of the black waves against the boat made me shudder. All of the elements had taught me to fear them—knowing as I did now that strange and terrible entities possessed and controlled them. . . .

When the sickly light of the mock-sun

made its appearance I managed to fall into fitful slumber. I lay in a semi-stupor during the day, forgetting to eat or drink—remembering only my fear. It seemed the briefest of time-divisions before daylight faded and beclouded dusk crept stealthily over the heavens.

In the livid burst of terror that swept over me when I realized it was almost time, I decided that I would kill Martin Suva. Of course! Why hadn't I thought of it before! With him gone, the *stürm-frauen* would have no earthly contact—they would be unable to appear.

Suva was asleep, exhausted. I chuckled. How simple! He was smaller than me. I could manage it easily. I seized a heavy iron oar-lock, and crept toward him. Careful, no noise. I would bash his brains out before he knew what was happening, then toss him to the fishes. I tittered feebly with joy. It was escape! *Escape!*

I HUNG over him wild-eyed. He looked haggard and worn, near death already. His clothes, like mine, were in tatters. There were dark patches around his eyes. His cheeks were gaunt. As he slept he uttered frightened little moans.

A last-moment shred of doubt assailed me. Was I *sure?* Did I have the right—? Just because Martin Suva was a deaf-mute, because he was Finnish, because he was secretive and strange, did that mean he . . .?

The thought of Flann, of Jorgsen, and of all the others caused my misgivings to vanish in a wild burst of anger. Of course it was he! Who else?

His eyes opened. They widened when he saw me there, the oar-lock poised. He gave a bleat of terror. I brought the weapon down, but he avoided it. He grabbed my arm, and then we were struggling, clawing like madmen to tear each other's throats. I was bigger, and had a kind of insanely desperate strength. I knocked him backwards over a seat, while my fingers circled his throat, tightened.

With a wild cry he flailed about with his arms, managing to grasp my—his—coat and tear it off my shoulder. Then his eyes bulged in their sockets, and he unleashed a harsh scream that shall haunt me to my dying day.

I forgot then that I meant to kill him. My fingers slipped nervelessly away.

It was a birthmark on my right shoulder, an odd bluish mark that resembled a woman's head, a woman's head as seen through swirls of her own long hair. I'd always been ashamed of that mark, even as a boy, keeping it always covered. And now, when Martin Suva screamed, I knew why. . .

I fell back in a daze, only dimly conscious of Suva's forlorn cry as he leaped into the sea and vanished.

I came out of my stupor to find myself alone. Alone with the mocking wind and the dreadful secrets the sea never tells. I was alone with the mind-blasting memory of the *stürm-frauen,* and of how they had killed my companions, one by one, leaving only the man whose distant ancestor had conceived an unholy bargain with them and they had presented him and his progeny with a token of immunity from their ravenings. The mark of the jonah. And that this man—who had unwittingly unleashed them to prey upon his companions as their prototype the storm preys upon all mankind was—*myself.*

In the May WEIRD TALES

Look out for favorites:

ROBERT BLOCH — DOROTHY QUICK

and an outstanding novelette by EDMOND HAMILTON

Superstitions and Taboos

By Weill

IT WAS BELIEVED SINCE ANCIENT TIMES THAT BY RUBBING ONESELF WITH A MAGIC SALVE OR BY PUTTING ON A GIRDLE OF WOLFSKIN, IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO TURN INTO A **WOLF!** THIS FORM OF WEREWOLF WAS SUPPOSEDLY ADOPTED TO SATISFY AN IRRESISTIBLE URGE FOR *RAW FLESH*, BUT IF ANY INJURY WERE SUSTAINED BY THE WEREWOLF WHILE COMMITTING ITS DEPREDATIONS, A CORRESPONDING HURT WOULD REMAIN ON THE HUMAN BODY ***UPON RESUMING HUMAN FORM!***

THE FROG WAS THOUGHT BY THE EGYPTIANS TO POSSESS VARIOUS SUPERNATURAL PROPERTIES! IT WAS CREDITED TO HAVE THE POWER OF THE **EVIL EYE,** AND AT THE SAME TIME TO BE POWERFUL PROTECTION AGAINST FASCINATION. IN MANY PARTS OF THE WORLD TODAY, AMULETS WITH THE FIGURE OF A FROG ARE ***STILL IN COMMON USE!***

Tunnel Terror

BY ALLISON V. HARDING

THEY were at first glance, a strange Mutt and Jeff pair. To some slouch-hatted, poorly dressed client of Ed's "Express Diner," there seemed little on the surface between the big man in work clothes and his small bright-eyed companion.

In a way, their friendship was an accident. It had started at Oceanside High School. Big Bill Van Hooten and little Tom Mead. Van Hooten with the muscles, Mead with the brains, making up in gray matter what he lacked in bulk. And the two got along.

Heading by A. R. TILBURNE

Did you ever guess that under-water is a dimension all its own?

or maybe it was a conspiracy of the expedient, for certainly Big Bill was too dumb to get far even on his muscles and Tom too small, likewise.

They'd drifted apart the way people do after high school, and Van Hooten got a job with a trucking company. Pulling at a wheel and loading crates were nearer to high-school football and baseball than sitting at an office desk somewhere. And anyway, remember, he was, as Joe Ferro, boss of the Acme, used to say with a significant finger-tapping at his forehead, "Thick!"

And Tom, just naturally it seemed, ended up on the Big City *Courier*. You know, that's that big almost-orange stucco building facing the wharves downtown where the presses go day and night, turning out five-inch headlines on everything from crime to scandal.

The two men lived in Oceanside though, and at night they'd meet often in the diner. Not to say much perhaps, because there wasn't always a lot to say, but just to be together for a moment like out of habit from old days and then go off with "G'nights" to their respective rooms.

Big Bill's father and mother had both been old beyond figuring when Tom first remembered them and they had been dead for several years. Let's see now, they died a couple of years before the tunnel went through from Oceanside to the city. All Tom knew of family was his aunt, who'd brought him up and seen him through high school and—he was glad of this, kind of like a repayment—to the first day he'd landed the job at the Big City *Courier*, and she said in an old tired voice full of tears, "I'm so glad for you, Tommy."

But the happiness of this added only a few more months to her life and then she was gone and he was as alone as Big Bill. So there didn't need to be much said at Ed's diner, but tonight there was. Big Bill was talking, wagging his massive head.

"It's Joe Ferro," he complained. "Can't please that guy, Tom. Always kickin'."

The little man continued to stare disinterestedly into the brown mud of his coffee, discouraging the thin cream from collecting on the top with the end of his cruller.

"I came through with some oranges this morning from upstate and Joe, he gets poking around in the back, and he says to me, he says, 'Bill, what the hell's the idea? Lot of these things are spoiled. Whatja do, float 'em across the river,' and he's making out like I dumped 'em in salt water on purpose."

It was a long speech for Bill, and he thumped his ham fist on the diner counter, making Ed, the proprietor, look up.

When the two men finished their evening meal and parted, Tom noticed the worried look in his big friend's eyes. He slapped him on the back and walked a ways home with him. It was no use, he thought to himself, letting either a trucking foreman or a city editor get you down.

THE next night Tom was first of the two at the diner. He wondered with an amused anticipation whether Big Bill had taken his advice given last night, "Aw, poke him one if he gets tough, fellah."

He heard steps outside the diner, a heavy tread up the wooden stairs to the car and Van Hooten came in.

"Hiya," said Ed from behind the counter automatically, not looking up from apron-polishing a plate.

But the big driver didn't answer. And in his eyes as he lumbered across the diner towards the small man, Tom saw something that looked out of place there—fear! The hulking trucker settled heavily on the next stool.

"How's it?" said Tom.

Automatically Van Hooten started to eat the food the counter man placed before him, but slowly without relish. Mead knew his friend too well to push the conversation. He could see that a struggle was going on in the big inarticulate driver. Bill pushed back his pie plate only half finished.

"Let's get out of here," he said, and wordlessly Tom followed.

Outside they walked along the dusk-streaked avenue. It was a poor section of the industrial town, hard by the river, and the damp, moist smell was as much a part of Oceanside as the red-brick factory chimneys, the poor run-down houses, and Ed's "Express Diner." The sound of their leather heels on the stones echoed hollowly from the buildings on either side as the men walked. Finally, abruptly, Big Bill spoke up.

"Had more trouble with Ferro today, Tommy."

"Whyn't ya sock him?" was Mead's comeback.

"I'm still hauling for the grocery account," went on Van Hooten, his tan brow wrinkled up perplexedly, "and Ferro blames me. Things I don't have nothin' to do with."

"What happened?"

"Well, I made my usual run up to Bureau Market and came back with a load of lettuce. I 'specially watched 'em load it in at the market. Looked like mighty good stuff to me. We get back here and whadda think I got in there?"

"What?"

"Seaweed!"

The two men stopped under a street lamp.

"Some kind of joke, huh?"

"Naw," persisted Van Hooten. "There's lettuce in the crates but a lot of old dirty green salt water seaweed too, and Ferro gives me the devil."

"Well," said Tom Mead after a moment's thought, "what's it to do with you? You're just the trucker. You don't contract for any of this food or buy it or even load it at the market."

The big man nodded. "That's what I told Ferro, Tommy, but there's sumpin' else. I been thinkin'. 'Member I told you about oranges yesterday soaked with sea water?"

The reporter bobbed his head.

"I figure it's to do with me coming through—the tunnel! Don't you get it, Tommy? Those funny things are happening in the tunnel."

Mead grinned. "Are you kidding, big boy? Whaddya think, that the seaweed and salt water just dropped through all that steel and concrete into your truck? Whaddya think, the river's got a grudge on you, Bill?"

The big man looked wise. And scared.

"It's the river," he whispered, as though two blocks away it might hear him. "It's what's in it, Tommy. What's in it down at the bottom where the tunnel goes!"

The reporter's first reaction was to laugh, but you don't laugh at a friend. Especially when "scared" is standing out all over him.

"You think I'm crazy," the big man put in, almost as though intuitively sensing the other's thoughts. "but I'm not. I got something to show you, Tommy. Will you come up to my room right now?"

Mead followed unquestioningly. As they walked through the dark streets, he found himself worried about his big friend. Does a trucker overwork and have to take a vacation? Well, why not? Maybe Bill had lugged a bit too much of that junk through the tunnel.

THEY climbed the steps to Van Hooten's fourth-floor room. Tom had been up before. It was plain, neat. No books he'd ever seen. Just a few magazines. Nothing to take much brain work or imagination. But after Big Bill's latch key had let them in, Mead noticed an old trunk in the middle of the room. It was dark-colored with a rusty hinge that squeaked as Van Hooten lifted the cover. For a moment Tom thought romantically of a pirate's treasure chest. He felt that inside certainly there would be crossed cutlasses on top of doubloons.

Instead, there came the fragrance of old clothes and then the clothes themselves. Precious few, belonging to Big Bill's parents. With a tenderness that was pathetic in one so large, Bill took the dresses and suits out. Mead found himself marveling at the culture of the Old World. These people, or their people before, had been somebodies in Holland across the sea. At the bottom of the trunk was a book, its yellow cloth cover stained with the passing of the decades. It was labeled simply with the flourishing strokes of an ancient dress hand, "Van Hooten."

The trucker did not offer the volume but took it on his knee as he sat by the table light, and again the reporter's eye noted the incongruity of the scene. The huge trucker in his rough work clothes, his big gnarled hands caressing a book that looked centuries old. And then he spoke and it seemed his harsh voice took on a softer quality. "Some of my people, Tommy, were about the first in this country. It tells all about them in this book." He frowned down at the pages before him and turned them idly, "About Peter Minuet and New Amsterdam and the Dutch fighting the English. It's kind of like school history books but it's my family."

The two sat quietly for a moment and then Van Hooten sighed.

"Take it," he said extending the book. "Take it and read it, Tommy. You'll see what I'm thinking."

Mead placed the book carefully in a paper.

"Sounds mighty interesting, Bill. You never told me anything—"

Van Hooten waved his hand. "These things you don't think about until something makes you. If they can be forgotten, they re better forgotten. You read the book, Tommy. It'll tell you."

The reporter rose. "For you I'll be glad to. Don't worry now, Bill. So what if they're blaming you for some crates of bad oranges and hauling seaweed instead of lettuce. I can find a spot for you at the paper."

The pleasantry was not appreciated. Van Hooten stood in the center of the room, looking not exactly at Mead but through him, beyond him, as though at those other people who'd once been a part of the things in the trunk, those others of his kin. It gave Tom the creeps, and with a quick good night he turned and left, with the wrapped book under his arm.

The reporter hurried his steps home, and once in his own room took forth the old volume, settling himself on the frame bed with the table lampshade tilted. For some of the letters in the book were nearly illegible with age. As he turned the pages, idly reading here and there, his interest dissolved somewhat and he began to wonder what it was Van Hooten had wanted him to read. It was seemingly the usual family record of trystings and marriages, births and deaths. Here was a notation concerning the first branch of the family to come from Holland to the New Land.

His eyes sharpened as he read on. The meticulous and penned letters spelled out words of adventure of the early days of the middle seventeenth century, of sea battles with the English. The name of Hendrik Van Hooten attracted Mead. Big Bill's father was a Hendrik Van Hooten and he'd heard the name before. Surely a direct antecedent of the burly trucker. The words on the yellowed brittle pages seemed to come alive. Ancient and stilted as the phraseology might be, the tale was one of excitement and blood. Hendrik Van Hooten the First had been junior master on a Dutch ship that had fought valiantly in and around the waters of New Amsterdam.

But the pages implied that "English, or other interests" had got to members of the crew. There had been the surrender of large tracts of east-coast land to the Britishers in the early 1660's, and Van Hooten, against the advice of his own blood cousin, had suddenly destroyed his ship in the river rather than go out into the bay and surrender it and its cargo to the enemy men-of-war.

THE story continued. Van Hooten had blown the bottom of his ship out with dynamite and the Dutch vessel had plunged to the bottom with all hands. Some said, the diary reported, that old Van Hooten himself had escaped, but this was not known for sure. Certain it was though, that from that time on there had been hatred in the divided ranks of the family.

An old-world curse had been leveled at Hendrik Van Hooten—"For him this river shall ever be closed by the doings of his own evil hand, nor shall it be passed over nor up and down for any purpose, sayeth the curse," and the diary gave a day and year in the late middle seventeenth century.

The family history went on then to affairs of birth and marriage. The details of events so all-important to those concerned and so trivial to an outsider. Tom was about to lay the book aside when another item caught his attention. It concerned another Hendrik Van Hooten who had been lost in the river one stormy night and presumed to have died. His body was later recovered, washed up opposite the city at Oceanside. The pages commented pithily that the poor doomed man was "purple in color, swollen, his mouth choked full of seaweed, showing that this was no ordinary act of God but the workings of the Van Hooten curse."

Mead closed the volume then and lay back to consider it possibilities. Certainly the old wives' tales had affected his friend's rather simple mind. The recent seaweed-in-the-lettuce episode, of course, recalled to Big Bill the ominous words in the family volume about an earlier Van Hooten. Tom lay awake for some time that night, enthralled with these pages from the past. As a youngster, Big Bill had probably been imbued with wild tales of the family curse, and even in the unimaginative soil of his mind, the legends had stuck. Mead fell asleep considering the

somewhat irrelevant aspect of what a splendid newspaper feature the whole yarn would make.

The next day he did his copy at the office and covered an afternoon sporting event for the paper, but all the time his thoughts were on Big Bill. He was waiting in Ed's diner again when their meeting time rolled around. Van Hooten's eyes were less troubled this time and he nodded at the diner proprietor, one or two other familiar customers, and Tom. Mead handed him the paper-wrapped volume.

"Well," Bill asked. "Whatja think of that?"

"It's interesting," answered the reporter. "It would make a nice Sunday feature story but you don't believe that curse business, do you? Why, they've practically given up that idea in the movies!"

Van Hooten shook his head. "It's no kid, Tom. This business is real."

"Aw, stop it, big boy," the reporter chortled. "You think the Van Hooten curse is reaching out of the river for you, huh?"

The look on the big driver's face straightened Mead's smiling lips, though.

"You can laugh, Tom, but it's all true. That river's bad for us of the Hendrik Van Hootens."

The look of worried conviction on the plain square face of the driver was almost comical. Lord, thought Mead to himself. I never thought a physique like that could have an *imagination*. The other toyed with the salt cellar for a moment, and then, "Did I ever tell you about my father, Tom?"

Mead nodded, "Well, some. He seemed to be a grand old gentleman."

"Did I tell you about how he died?"

"People die," reasoned the reporter. "He was a mighty old fellow, Bill."

"No, it wasn't any act of God," persisted the big driver, "but like the curse said. You didn't know much about it, Tom, at the time. The doc said my father took sick from the shock of my mother dying but nobody thought . . . nobody thought he was going to die, and if I hadn't been away from home, I never would've let the doc do what he did, 'cuz I would've *known*.

"See, he thought my father should come in to City Hospital and he got an ambulance and everything to take him. Across the river. Do you get it, Tom? On the ferry and during the trip a squall came up. That's how the doc explained it to me. He just died sudden and unaccountably."

Mead looked doubtful. He blurted out, "I suppose there was seaweed around too."

"That's right," said Van Hooten. "Seaweed there on the ambulance bed where he lay, 'cuz the doc told me and he wouldn't lie or make things up not knowing anything about our family and the river being after us!"

The two were silent for a minute and then Mead asked, "How did today go, Bill?"

"Okay," said the trucker. "I was working over to the border of the state, didn't go near the river all day. Tomorrow though, I gotta go through, Joe Ferro says."

THE next day Mead made time to go to Oceanside City Hall and look through the death certificate archives. There, sure enough, was one made out to Big Bill's father, Hendrik Van Hooten. The death did take place on the Oceanside-Big City ferry in a hospital ambulance and the laconic comment of the attesting physician was, "Shock." That, of course, fit in neatly with the legend of the Van Hooten curse but might also, and to his mind was beyond question, just a coincidence. With sudden inspiration he looked up at the clock, on the wall of the record room. It was three. He still had some time before he was needed back at the newspaper office and he quickly phoned the Acme Trucking Company.

He got someone gruff, uncommunicative, disagreeable, as he imagined Joe Ferro probably was. The replies were laconic but he gathered that Big Bill Van Hooten was picking up canned goods stock at the North Street Depot at the outskirts of Big City. He was due back here sometime after six. Yes, the loading took an hour or so.

Mead tore out of the City Hall, hopped a cab, and directed the hack driver to the food depot. They started through Oceanside streets, headed towards the river past the big orange brick "breather," through the toll gate of the tunnel and into its illuminated tube, the tires swishing damply on the red-brick road surface. As they sped through its length, Tom could not help but think of the legend of the Dutch ship that

had gone down to nestle somewhere near in the river bed. He noted grudgingly his own feeling of relief when the cab poked its nose up out of the underground like a mole. Sunshine slanting down into the opening of the tube which they were approaching was a welcome sight.

In twenty more minutes they reached the North Street Depot, and Tom's heart leaped at the sight of the big red Acme truck. Bill was in the driver's seat even as Tom threw a bill to his cab driver and sprinted.

"Hey," he yelled, "I'm hitching a ride with you back!"

Big Bill hesitated for a second, then threw open the door of the cab and grinned.

"Hiya, Tom," he said. "Glad to see you. Did the *Courier* fire you?"

Tom slid onto the leather seat beside the burly driver, and the big motor surged forward in first gear. Van Hooten sent the vehicle into the highway traffic expertly. They took a road downward that traversed the river. The last of the sun sliding into the west warmed Tom's face. He turned and looked at Big Bill. The driver's huge hands were knotted on the black steering wheel. His massive body was set and his eyes squinted ahead. There was a white look around his mouth.

And suddenly Mead spoke, "Why don't you quit your job, Bill? If there's sumpin' that bothers you, it's not worth it. I know to tell another guy his worries is nothing and doesn't do much good. There's not many truckers better than you, kid. You could hook on with a company anywhere in the city probably. How about it?"

Bill turned for a minute and looked at his companion, trouble in his eyes.

"I've thought of that, Tom. I don't like it, this that I have to do, but somehow something kind of draws me like a magnet. Like today. We're going back through the tunnel and I don't want to, yet I do. D'ya understand? I can't explain it better'n that."

Mead turned his face away again and gazed at the river, his forehead wrinkled perplexedly. The drone of the tires took on a sharper quality as the truck ground up an incline and then slowed for a red light. Van Hooten set the tonnage rolling again expertly, and they weaved into the line of cars jockeying for the tunnel entrances. Somehow, inexplicably, tension grew in Mead. It was absurd, he reasoned with himself, absurd to let the old wives' legends and crazy ideas of another affect oneself.

Before he could reason further, the truck had wound its serpentine way into the slow lane of the truck tube. They started down the decline, the concrete giving way to the red brick of the tunnel. Ahead, the white tile sides and inset lights stretched. Truck traffic was light at this time of day and they seemed alone. A solitary policeman stood just inside the opening on the catwalk to the left. The heavy ply tires of the truck began to swish damply as the roadway slanted downward.

Bill switched on fender indicator lights and the dash dials. The thunder of the motor reverberated back from the light walls. The truck used up its coasting speed and hit the straightened-out level of the tunnel. Tom found himself peering ahead intently, looking for something, he knew not what, and he jerked his eyes away from the dim tube ahead. He turned then to look at Bill and the driver grinned back. But despite the welcoming smile, the reporter saw that the big fellow was keeping tight rein on himself. The inside side lights slipped by monotonously and Mead suddenly became conscious of the biting pressure of his fingernails against his palms. He had been sitting stiffly with tightly clamped fists. The truck droned on, and except that here and there a patch of fog, made up perhaps of exhaust fumes as yet undispersed by the air intakes, the red composition road tube stretched harmless before them.

Actually, the entire trip through the tunnel takes but seven or eight minutes, but Tom felt he had been underground for half an hour under tons of water and surrounded by the dim, deep mysteries of the river bottom. Silent, brooding secrets that allowed for no solution.

Tom's mood changed abruptly as the truck crawled into increased engine life, taking up the load as the long slope leading upward began. "Well," he remarked loudly above the road and reverberations of the vehicle. "Wasn't much to that, kid."

It was the first word either of them had spoken since going in at the Big City entrance. Van Hooten smiled back and, visibly,

strain had left him too. With a grinding of gears, the truck stuck its square nose up and tumbled its way out the Oceanside end of the underwater highway. Now that they were out, the whole of the episode seemed ridiculous to Tom Mead and he said as much to Big Bill as they slid to a corner a block away from the newspaper office.

That night the big trucker did not show up at Ed's diner and Mead ate alone. He waited for some time after he'd finished, then decided to take in a movie. Outside the theater though, he stopped. He'd go by Van Hooten's anyway and see what the trucker was up to.

It was dark by the time he walked the several blocks. The steps creaked ominously as he climbed the flights to Big Bill's. He knocked on the door. There was no answer. He tried again louder. Finally, just as he was about to turn away, he heard a step from within and fumbling hands on the lock. The door swung open then and the driver stood in front of him, his hugeness unsteady, his eyes dilated. He jerked his head almost imperceptibly for Tom to come inside. Then with actions that were swift in spite of their unsteadiness, he quickly relocked and bolted the door.

MEAD knew immediately that the big man had been drinking, but there was something in him more than that. More powerful than alcohol. For the reporter had seen Van Hooten drinking before and it merely served to accentuate his usual boisterous, rollicking nature. Tonight the man who slumped into the chair in front of the reporter had been drinking, yes. But he was also mortally afraid. Mead knew his friend of old well enough to realize that a blunt demand for explanation would not serve. Van Hooten would speak when he was ready and not before.

Big Bill leaned in the chair for a time, his face working, his mouth forming syllables, words, that were given no sound but stayed like the ghosts of unspeakable things in the mind. Finally, his eyes rolled toward the ceiling, heavenward, and he gasped.

"I've sent for him."

"Sent for who?" said Mead in a small voice.

There was no answer, only the strange disquieting workings of the man's face before him. Mead stood up and crossed to his friend. He shook him, first gently and then harder, but there was no satisfactory response from the big man.

"C'mon, snap out of it," said the diminutive reporter. He felt angry with Van Hooten, an emotion that was probably akin to the long-standing friendship he'd had with the trucker.

"Get ahold of yourself, Bill. Who's coming? What's all this mumbo-jumbo stuff about? You'll be seeing the ghost of Joe Ferro next."

But the driver was insensitive to the appeals and Mead let go of his shoulder.

"He's coming," Van Hooten said again through thick lips. "I've sent for him and he's coming."

It was then that Mead noticed the candle standing in the melt of its own wax on the far side of the floor. Beside it the volume that he had so recently thumbed through in his own room. More—crossed sticks and a pile of ashes on the floor. The Van Hooten volume was open, and when Mead peered down he saw a heading in a towards-the-back-of-the-volume page labeled, "Exorcise of the Curse." Tom bent closer and read, "—and for all these matters of the past, the present, and the future, the judge shall be the one before the first Van Hooten, keeper of these magic powers and bestower of both good and evil as justice may require—"

Mead was interrupted by the sound of a step from behind. Big Bill was almost on him as the reporter spun. Bill brushed the small man aside and stooped for the book. In his eyes Mead had seen the angry red fire of temper. Mead reached for the book again but Van Hooten shoved him away, this time brutally so that his friend fell heavily, and then, with an animal sound took a match out of his pocket and held it to the book. The crisp pages took quickly, and in a moment, the volume was a flaming square on the floor.

Mead had pulled himself into a chair and was watching. As suddenly as it had come and as the flames of the book died, the anger drained from Van Hooten's face. He moved over to where Tom sat, laid a heavy hand on the reporter's shoulder.

"I'm sorry, Tom," he mumbled, and then as a propitiatory gesture, he brought over a

bottle of liquor and set out two cups, motioning the smaller man to join him.

They drank then and the time slipped past. Finally Mead lifted his wrist to look at the watch there after what seemed like hours. It was after midnight. Van Hooten was again slumped in the chair on the other side of the room, the worse for their several drinks on top of what he'd had earlier in the evening. Mead himself was sleepy from the liquor, and the single-yellow bulb burning on the center table was conducive to drowsiness.

Against his will and better judgement Mead found his eyelids dropping. He would force his head upward, look around the room, and make plans for getting to his feet and leaving, but the drowsiness came back and it was so comfortable. Big Bill was sleeping—a little nap wouldn't hurt.

THE next thing he knew, Tom Mead awoke, his back cramped in the uncomfortable wooden chair and the light of the room now subtly different. The center bulb had gone out but still there was illumination, strange yellow suffused with green streaked the room. He turned his head slowly to limber the stiffness in his neck, and as his head swerved to the left, his eyes focused, incredulously at first, on a figure that sat silently at the far end of the room.

Tom tried to force himself upward in the chair but it was as though a heavy weight bore him down. The figure was of a man, incredibly old, with parchment-yellow face and elaborate ancient clothes.

Mead's unbelieving eyes then noticed that on the old man's knee rested a cutlass, rusty with age but once probably of fine workmanship. As he watched, powerless to move a muscle or speak, Mead saw the figure rise and start toward the center of the room—towards him. The strange greenish-yellow light caught the guard hilt of the cutlass and reflected bleakly for a moment, and then the old wax-like figure passed on by and Mead forced his eyes to follow the apparition's course. The aged figure stopped in front of Big Bill, extended the cutlass, and then with an inexorable gentleness lifted one of Big Bill's huge hands, relaxed in sleep, and carefully curled the fingers over the finely made cutlass.

Then slowly the figure turned and moved with measured tread back past the reporter over to the far end of the room where the fire had been, where the ashes still were. And suddenly, Tom Mead was overcome with the appalling nature of his experience. His senses swam. Things grew black for a moment or many minutes. He could not tell, when again his eyes opened.

But the figure was gone and he was alone in the room with the still-sleeping Van Hooten, and the first streaks of dawn were touching the plain yellow papering of the room. The big man had not moved. His hands still hung slackly, and there was no sign of the cutlass that Mead had seen in his dream—for a dream it certainly must have been. Soundlessly, Mead straightened his tie and shrugged himself into his coat, quietly tiptoeing to the door and letting himself out.

It was a chill early dawn with a dampness that permeated even to a man's soul. Clouds scudded across the horizon in the early sky. Mead shivered and rubbed the heel across his cold cramped back. From a few blocks away a river vessel hooted, and the sound was not reassuring. He made his way to Ed's diner and downed three cups of black coffee, one after another. Then he headed for the newspaper office.

THE girl in the front office raised her eyebrows questioningly as Mead came in. He had not been that early to work since his first month with the sheet. Reports of a three-alarm fire came in later in the morning and the city desk sent him north to cover the story. After he'd filed his paragraphs from the scene of the blaze, Mead turned the *Courier* sedan back towards home.

Storm clouds were blackening the sky now and the wind whistled at the sedan window. Suddenly, a compelling thought made Mead pull to the nearest drugstore. He placed a toll call to Oceanside, gave his name, and got gruff Foreman Ferro again. Sure, Big Bill had reported in to work that morning. Else he would have been fired. Get it! Yeah, he was over in Big City. He'd gone over early and was coming back through the tunnel in the afternoon with a shipment.

Tom slammed up the receiver and sprinted for his car. Up north here there was no tunnel but the mid-river bridge was only a

few miles distant. He jazzed the *Courier* auto across and headed towards the outskirts of Big City on the other side. His memory of the previous night loomed large in his mind as the day grew darker and more ominous. The strange actions of Big Bill, the startlingly realistic image of the old man of another age. And then one conclusion that had slowly crept into his consciousness sometime during the day. That was, that all the accidents so-called that had happened to the Van Hootens on the river since the curse was laid had come on bad days when the tempestuous black elements had conspired as it were to cloak an even greater danger.

Mead found himself racing the car along the roads that led into town, and by his very hurry, he realized he was tacitly accepting the legend, in part if not all. Anyway, he wanted to keep Big Bill from that tunnel run. But he sent his car lurching into the food depot just too late. Van Hooten had left for the south a few minutes earlier, he was advised. Undeterred, Mead took up the chase and rocketed the protesting sedan down the roads in pursuit.

Roaring up to an intersection he saw the Acme truck disappearing around a far corner. He speeded up even more and gained on the next incline. He tooted frantically but the truck gave no notice of acknowledgment. Twin lines of traffic developed then around an excavated place in the highway. For a moment, Mead was able to draw abreast and he yelled at Big Bill but the truck driver stared frozenly ahead, set and unnatural. In a moment more, moving traffic had jockeyed the red truck ahead.

Just before they reached the tunnel, the traffic slowed and stopped. Quickly Tom swerved the newspaper's sedan to the roadside, hopped out and ran. He caught the guard rail on the rear of the truck just as the cars started in motion again. Straining mightily, he pulled himself upright as the vehicle gathered speed, and with furious twisting got the back van door open and let himself inside where he fell sprawling midst the crates.

Picking himself up he scrambled forward and came to the glass-paneled portion that separated him from the driver's compartment. He hammered on the pane but the thick stiff neck and back of Van Hooten ahead paid no heed. Through the glass and out the truck's sides the reporter could see they were nearing the tunnel entrance, and as he looked, the day's blackness suddenly gave way to rain and the quickening tempo of drops on the steel roof lent strength to his blows on the panel. But Big Bill never so much as looked around. And then past the toll gates, the truck picked up speed and swung careeningly into the curving decline of the tunnel entrance.

Mead gave up his attacks on the thick glass and looked frantically around for some sort of heavy object. The crates were heavy but too large for one man to lift, and there seemed to be nothing else.

As he searched, the sound of raindrops on the roof increased—the sudden realization of this made him straighten with a gasp. For they were in the tube. There could be no rain here! There could be no water—but river water!

MEAD crowded forward again, peering through the pane and the cab into the tunnel. It was not his imagination that the roadway ahead was darker, almost obscured in a green-yellow mist. Even the white-tiled sides and the set-in lights seemed many yards away instead of a few feet. His breath began to catch in his throat. The dampness made each inhalation a heavy task. But Van Hooten, as though transfixed, sat woodenly at the wheel and the truck roared on into the misty shadows of some unspeakable hell.

Mead felt it then. From the torrent of water that fell on the roof, his upturned face caught a drop or two and it came to him with a new horror. The sudden sharp salt taste. That could mean only one thing. Dear Lord, the tunnel was going! She'd sprung a leak and they'd be drowned down here. Trapped under tons of water in their own white-tile and red-brick tomb!

The truck slackened speed so abruptly then that it threw Mead to his knees. He felt his way in the gloom along the floor and crawled to the back opening. His pulses were pounding as he forced the metal frame open, and as he did, a wet slimy substance, not water exactly but heavier, much heavier than air, slipped in around him with chill octopus fingers, and he seemed to be swirling out in-

to the dim green-yellow streaked light of the underwater highway. The sound of the truck's motor had long ago been lost, for the swishing and plopping and splashing was heavier, noisier. Mead thought of Van Hooten sitting in his cab. He struggled a few steps forward but his body seemed not to obey him.

It was as though he were floating, that last step of consciousness before, ether-like, you float into a swirling blackness.

He did not know afterward exactly what happened but somehow he crawled, staggered, or swam his way out of that tunnel hell. He was treated by an ambulance surgeon at the mouth of the tunnel where he collapsed, and by that time word of the tragedy inside the tube had come out.

It was a confrere of his from the Courier who told him, big-eyed, self-important, not sparing him because of his friendship with Big Bill or the experience he'd just been through. Van Hooten was dead, sitting there in his truck, unaccountably, that is, by all the laws of logic.

There is nothing briefer than a police investigation of a death that has no forthright logical explanation, but what explanation could you have for a man who had died of drowning sitting at the wheel of his truck in the middle of a tunnel, seaweed in the cab? And yet, of course, no one could drown in a perfectly sound tunnel.

Port of Authority officials hastily put out statistics of the number of million cars that had transversed the tunnel without accident. Then too, there was no logical explanation for the cutlass that was found in Bill Van Hooten's right hand, grasped tightly, its blade stained red with fresh blood, not his own obviously, for there wasn't a mark on him anywhere.

Tom Mead's part in the whole episode was considered thoroughly unimportant and the official verdict was "Heart attack." Mead was let go after some questioning and testimony brought forth his friendly relationship with the deceased. His only memento from the episode, the clothes he had had on, rotted now, a few months later, from soaking they'd received from the vengeful salt river water—where none could possibly be!

The Traveller

BY RAY BRADBURY

You might call these people "folksy" that is, until you got to know them!

Heading by BORIS DOLGOV

FATHER looked into Cecy's room just before dawn. She lay upon her bed. He shook his head irritably. He waved at her.

"Now, if you can tell me what good she does, lying there," he said, "I'll eat the crape on my mahogany box. Sleeping all night, eating breakfast, and then lying on top the bed all day."

"Oh, but she's so helpful," said Mother, leading him down the hall away from Cecy's slumbering pale figure. "Why she's one of

the most talented members of the Family. What good are your brothers, they sleep all day and do *nothing*. At least Cecy is *active*."

They went downstairs through the scent of black candles, the black crape on the bannister whispering as they passed. Father unloosened his tie, exhaustedly. "Well, we work nights," he said. "Can we help it if we're—as you put it—old-fashioned?"

"Of course not. Everyone in the Family can't be modern." She opened the cellar door, they went down into darkness arm in arm. She looked over at his lean white face, smiling. "It's really very lucky I don't have to sleep at all. If you were married to a night-sleeper, think what a marriage it would be? Be silent, now. And as for Cecy, she helps me a million ways each day. She sends her mind down to the green-grocers for me to see what he has. She puts her mind inside the butcher. That saves me a long trip if he's fresh out of good cuts. She warns me when people are coming to visit. And—oh, well, there are a dozen other things—"

They paused in the moist cellar near the large mahogany box. Its lid was thrown back, it was empty. He settled himself into it, still not convinced. "But if she'd only contribute more to the Family," he said. "I'm a little afraid, Alice, I'll have to ask her to get out and get a job—"

"Sleep on it," she said to him. "Think it over. You may change your mind by the time it's sunset. Sleep on it, won't you?"

She was closing the lid down upon him. "Well—" he said, slowly, thoughtfully. The lid closed.

"Goodnight, dear," said the mother.

"Goodnight," he said, muffled, far away, inside the box.

The sun rose. She walked upstairs to fetch breakfast.

CECY ELLIOTT was the one who Traveled. She looked like an ordinary eighteen-year-old girl. But then none of the Family looked like what they were. There was nothing of the fang, the bat wing, the worm or the witch to them. They lived in small towns across world, simply, semi-modernly, in planned obscurity.

Cecy Elliott awoke. She went down through the house, humming. "Good morning, Mother!" She walked down to the cellar to re-check each of the large mahogany boxes, to dust them, to be sure they were tightly sealed. "Father," she said, polishing one box. "Cousin Willard," she said, examining another. "And—" she rapped lightly upon a third, "Grandmother Elliott." There was a rustle inside like a piece of papyrus. "It's a strange, cross-bred family," she mused, going up to the kitchen again. "Some of us sleep days, walk nights. Some sleep nights, walk days. Some don't sleep at all. Me—I sleep all the time. Different kinds of sleep."

She ate breakfast. In the middle of a dish of apricots she caught her mother staring at her. She laid down her spoon. "Father will change his mind," she said. "I'll prove how valuable I am, you wait and see."

The mother said, "You were inside me just now when I talked to your father?"

"Yes."

"I thought I felt you looking out from inside my head," said the mother with a nod.

That was all. Cecy finished the meal and went up to bed. She carefully made it, folding down all the blankets and clean cool sheets. Then she laid herself out on top the covers, closed her eyes, rested her thin white fingers on her small bosom, and rested her slight, exquisitely sculptured head upon her thick gathering of chestnut hair.

She started to Travel.

Her mind slipped from the room, over the little green-lawned, drowsy town, into the wind and past the green depression of the ravine. All day she would fly and wander. Her mind would pop into dogs, sit there, and she would feel the feelings of a dog, taste good bones, sniff trees. She would hear as a dog heard. She would forget her human body entirely. She would be a dog. It was not telepathy. It was complete separation from one bodily environment. It was entrance into dogs, men, old maids, birds, into children at hop-scotch, into lovers on their morning beds, into workers asweat with digging, into unborn children's pink, dream-like brains.

Where would she go today? She made her decision, and went.

When Mother tiptoed up the stairs a moment later to peer into the room she saw Cecy's body there, the chest not moving, the face quiet. Cecy was gone away already. Mother nodded and smiled.

Cecy Elliott's three younger sisters were playing Tisket Tasket Coffin Casket in the back yard at noon when the tall loud man banged on the front door and marched straight in when Mother answered.

"That was Uncle John!" said the littlest girl, breathlessly.

"The one we hate?" asked the second.

"What does he want?" cried the third. "He looked mad!"

"We should be mad at him, that's what," explained the littlest. "For what he did to the Family a hundred years ago."

"Listen!" They listened. "He's running upstairs!"

"He sounds like he's crying."

"Do grown-ups cry?"

"Sure, silly!"

"He's in Cecy's room! He's shouting and laughing and crying, and he sounds mad and sad and fraidy-cat all together!"

THE littlest one began to cry herself. She ran to the cellar door. "Daddy, daddy, come up! Wake up! Uncle John's here and he might have a cedar stake with us! I don't want a stake in my heart! Daddy!"

"Shhh," hissed the biggest girl. "He hasn't a stake! You can't wake Father, anyhow! Listen!"

Their heads tilted, their eyes glistened, upward, waiting. . . .

"Get away from the bed!" commanded Mother, in the doorway.

Uncle John bent over Cecy's slumbering body. His lips trembled and there was a wild, fey madness in his green eyes.

"Am I too late?" he demanded, hoarsely, sobbing. "Is she gone?"

"Of course," snapped Mother. "Are you blind? She's been gone since early morning. She might not be back for days. Sometimes she lies there for a week. I don't have to feed the body. She takes sustenance from whatever or whoever she's in. Stand back now!"

Uncle John stiffened, with one knee pressed onto the bed.

"Why didn't she wait, why couldn't she be here?" he wanted to know, frantically, closing his eyes, his hands shaking. He nudged her again.

"You heard me!" declared Mother. "She's not to be touched. She's got to be left as she is. So if she comes home she can get back inside her body exactly right."

Uncle John turned his head. His long hard brown face was lined and pocked, with deep black grooves under the worried eyes.

"Where'd she go?" he demanded. "I've got to find her!"

Mother talked straight at him. "I don't know. She has favorite places. You might find her in a child running along a trail in the ravine. Or swinging on a vine. Or you might find her in a crayfish under a rock in the creek, looking up at you. Or she might be playing chess inside an old man in the courthouse square. You know as well as I she can be anywhere." A wry look came to Mother's lips. "She might be right here inside me now, looking out at you, laughing, and not telling you. This might be her talking and having fun. And you wouldn't know it."

"Why—" he said, heavily, swinging around like a huge pivoted stone. His big hands came up. "If I thought—"

Mother talked on, quietly. "Of course she's not in me, here. And if she was there'd be no way to tell." Her eyes gleamed with malice. She stood tall and gracefully, looking at him with no fear. "Now suppose you explain what you want with her?"

He seemed to be listening to a distant bell tolling. He shook his head angrily, to clear it. Then he growled. "Something . . . inside me. . . ." He broke off. He leaned over the cold, sleeping body. "Cecy! Come back, you hear! You can come back if you want!"

THE wind blew softly through the high willows outside the sun-drifted windows. The bed creaked under his shifted weight. The distant bell tolled again and he was listening to it, but Mother could not hear it. Only he heard the drowsy summer-day sounds of it, far far away. His mouth opened numbly:

"I've got a thing for her to do for me. For the past month I've been going kind of—insane. I get funny ideas. I was going to take a train and go to the big city and talk

to a psychiatrist but he wouldn't help. I know that Cecy can enter into my head and exorcise these fears I have. She can clean them out like a vacuum cleaner, if she wants to help me. She's the only one can suck away the filth and cobwebs and make me new again. That's why I need her, you understand?" he said in a tight, hoarse-sounding voice. He licked his lips. "She's GOT to help me!"

"After what you've done to the Family?" said Mother.

He jerked his head viciously. "I did nothing to the Family, ever!"

"The story goes," said Mother, "that in bad times, whenever you needed money, you got paid a hundred dollars for every one of the Family you handed over to the law to be staked through the heart."

"You lie!" he said, weaving his head like a fighter hit hard. "It's never been proved. Not by anyone! You lie!"

"Nevertheless, I don't think Cecy would want to help you. The Family wouldn't want her to."

"The *Family* wouldn't, wouldn't it!" His voice barely shook the floor timbers. He brought his fist down upon the bed. "Damn the Family! I won't go insane because the Family wants me to! I need help, damn it, and I'll get it! Or—"

Mother faced him, her face reserved, her hands crossed over her bosom.

He lowered his voice. "Listen to me, Mrs. Elliott," he said, suddenly getting hold of himself. "And you, too, Cecy," he said to the sleeping body. "If you're there," he added. "Listen to this." He looked at a wall clock ticking on the far, sun-drenched wall. "If Cecy isn't back here by six o'clock tonight, ready to help me clean out my mind and make me sane—I'll—I'll go to the police." He drew himself up. "I've got a list of addresses of all the Elliotts who live in Mellin Town. The police can cut enough new cedar stakes in an hour to drive through a dozen Elliott hearts." He stopped, wiped the sweat off his face. The distant bell began to toll again. He listened to it. He shook his head a bit. Then he hitched up his trousers, tightened the buckle clasp with a jerk and walked past Mother to the door. "You heard me?" he asked.

"Yes," she said. "I heard. But even *I* can't get Cecy back here if she doesn't want to come. She'll come back, eventually. Be patient. Don't go running off to the police—"

He cut her off. "I can't wait. This nightmare of mine's gone on eight weeks now! I can't stand it any longer!" He stared at the clock. "I'm going. I'll try to find Cecy in the town. If I don't find her by six—well, you know what a cedar stake's like—"

His heavy shoes pounded away down the hall, fading down the stairs, out of the house. When the noises had all gone, the mother turned and looked earnestly, painfully down upon the bed.

"Cecy," she called, softly, insistently. "Cecy, come home!"

There was no response from the body. Cecy lay there, not moving, for as long as her mother waited.

HE WALKED down the streets of Mellin Town looking for her in every child that licked an ice-pop and in every little white dog that patted by on the way to some unknown destination.

The town spread out like a fancy graveyard. Nothing more than a few monuments, really—edifices to lost arts and pastimes. It was a great meadow of elms and hawthorns all ashower with green color, laid out with wooden walks you could haul into your barn at night if the hollow sound of walking people irked you. There were tall old maiden houses, lean and narrow and wisely wan, in which were spectacles of colored glass, upon which the thinned golden hair of age-old bird nests sprouted. There was a drug shop full of quaint wire-rung soda fountain stools with plywood bottoms, and the memorious clear sharp odor that used to be in drug stores but never is any more. And there was a barber emporium with a red-ribboned pillar twisting around inside a chrysalis of glass in front of it. And there was a grocery that was all fruity shadow and dusty boxes and the smell of an old Armenian woman, which was like the odor of a rusty penny. The town lay under the willows and mellow-leaf trees, in no hurry, and somewhere in the town was Cecy, the one who traveled.

Uncle Jonn stopped, bought himself a bottle of orange crush, drank it, wiped his face

with his handkerchief, his eyes jumping. I'm afraid, he thought. I'm afraid.

He saw a code of birds strung dot-dash on the high telephone wires. Was Cecy up there laughing at him out of sharp bird eyes, shuffling her feathers, singing at him? He suspicioned the cigar store Indian. There was no animation in that cold, carved, tobacco-brown image.

Far away, like on a sleepy Sunday morning, he heard the bells ringing in a valley of his head. He had momentarily blind spells. He stood in a pall of blackness and white, tortured faces drifted through his inturned vision.

"Cecy!" he cried, wildly, to everything, everywhere. "I know you can help me! Clean me out, shake me like a tree! Cecy!" The blindness passed. He was bathed in a cold sweating that did not stop, but ran like a faucet. "I know you can do it. I saw you help Cousin Marianne years ago. Ten years ago, wasn't it?" He stood, concentrating.

Marianne had been a girl shy as a mole, her hair twisted like roots on her round ball of head. Marianne had hung in her skirt like a clapper in a bell, never ringing when she walked; just swithering along, one heel after another. She gazed at weeds, and the wooden walk under-toe, she looked at your chin if she saw you at all—and never got as far as your eyes. Her mother despaired of Marianne's every marrying or succeeding.

It was up to Cecy, then. Cecy went into Marianne like fist into glove.

Marianne jumped and ran, yelled and glinted her yellow eyes. Marianne flickered her skirts, unbraided her hair and let it hang in a shimmery veil over her half-nude shoulders. Marianne giggled and rang like a gay clapper inside the tolling bell of her dress. Marianne squeezed her face into many attitudes of coyness, merriment, intelligence, maternal bliss and love.

The boys raced after Marianne. Marianne got married.

Cecy withdrew.

Marianne had hysterics; her spine was gone! She lay like a limp corset all one day. But the habit was in her now. Some of Cecy had stayed on like a fossil imprint on soft shale rock; and Marianne began tracing the habits and thinking them over and remembering what it was like to have Cecy inside her, and pretty soon she was running and shouting and giggling all by herself; a corset animated, as it were, by a memory!

Marianne had lived joyously thereafter.

STANDING with the cigar store Indian for his solace, Uncle Jonn now shook his head violently. Dozens of little bubbles floated before his eyes, each of them with tiny slanted, microscopic globules of eyes staring in, in at his brain.

What if he never found Cecy? What if the plain wind had bourne her all the way to Elgin? Wasn't that where she dearly loved to bide her time, in the asylum for the insane, touching their minds, holding, turning their confetti thoughts?

Far away in afternoon distance a great metal whistle sighed and echoed, steam shuffled as a train cut across valley trestles, over cool rivers, through ripe cornfields, into tunnels like finger into thimble, under arches of shimmering walnut trees. Jonn stood, afraid. What if Cecy were in the cabin of the engineer's head, now? She loved riding the monster engines across country far as she could stretch the contact. Yank the whistle cord until it screamed across sleeping night land or drowsy day country.

He walked down a shady street and out of the corner of his eye he thought he saw an old woman, wrinkled as a dried fig, naked as a thistle-seed, floating among the branches of a hawthorne tree, with a stake of cedar stuck into her breast, driven deep.

Somebody screamed!

He felt his head thumped. A blackbird, soaring skyward, took a lock of his hair with it!

He shook his fist after the bird, heaved a rock. "Scare me, will you!" he raved. Then, breathing rawly, he watched the bird soar around behind him to sit on a limb waiting for another chance to dive for hair.

He turned from the bird, slyly.

He heard the whirring sound of wings.

He jumped around, grabbed up. "Cecy!"

He had the bird! It fluttered, screamed in his big hands.

"Cecy!" he called, looking into his fingers at the wild, black creature. The bird drew blood with its bill.

"Cecy, I'll kill you if you don't help me!"

The bird shrieked and cut him.

He closed his hands tight, tight, tight.

He walked away from where he finally dropped the dead bird and did not look back at it, even once.

HE WALKED down into the ravine that ran through the very center of town. What's happening now, he wondered? Has Cecy's mother phoned people? Are the Elliott's afraid? He swayed drunkenly, great lakes of sweat bursting out under his armpits. Well, let *them* be afraid awhile. He was tired of being afraid. He would look just a little longer then he would go to the police, by God!

Now he stood on the edge of the creek. He laughed when he thought of the Elliotts scurrying madly, trying to find some way around him. But there was no way. They'd see to it that Cecy came and helped him. Yes, sir, they'd see to it. They couldn't afford to let good old Uncle Jonn die insane, no, sir.

He looked down at the slow waters. B-b-shot eyes lay deep in the water, staring roundly up at him.

On blazing hot summer noons Cecy had often entered into the soft-shelled grayness of the mandibled heads of crayfish. She had often peeked out from the black egg eyes upon their sensitive filimentary stalks and felt the creek sluice by her, steadily and in fluid veils of coolness and captured light. Breathing out and in the particles of stuff that floated in water, holding her horny lichened claws before her like some elegant salad utensils, swollen and sharp as scissors. She watched the giant strides of boy feet progressing toward her through the creek bottom, heard the faint, water-thickened shout of boys searching for crayfish, jabbing their pale fingers down, tumbling rocks aside, clutching and tossing frantic flippery animals into open metal cans where a score of other crayfish scuttled like a basket of waste paper come to life.

She watched pale stalks of boy legs poise over her rock, saw the nude loin-shadows of boy thrown upon the sandy muck of the creek floor, saw the suspenseful hand hovered, heard the suggestive whisper of a boy who's spied a gray-brown prize aslumber beneath a boulder. Then, as the hand plunged, the boulder rolled, kicked, Cecy flirted the borrowed fan of her inhabited body, jerked backward in a little sand explosion, and vanished downstream.

On to another rock she went to sit fanning the sand, holding her claws before her, proud of them, her tiny glass-bulb eyes glowing black as creek-water filled her bubbling mouth, cool, cool, cool—

It was the realization that Cecy might be anywhere close at hand, in anything alive, that drove Uncle Jonn almost mad with fury. In any squirrel or chipmunk, in a disease germ, even on his aching body, Cecy might be existing! She could even enter into amœbas.

On some blazing summer noons Cecy would be in an amœba darting, vacillating deep down in the old, tired, philosophical dark waters of a kitchen well. On days when the world high over her, above the unmoved water, was a dreaming nightmare of heat printed upon each object of the land, she would lie somnolent, quivering and cool and distant, deep within the well-throat. Up above, trees were like images burned in green fire. Birds were like bronze stamps you inked and punched on your brain. Houses steamed like manure sheds. When a door slammed it was like a rifle shot. The only good sound on a simmering day was the asthmatic suction of well water drawn up into a porcelain cup, there to be inhaled through an old skelatinous woman's porcelain teeth. Over her she could hear the brittle tap of an old woman's shoes, the sighing voice of the old woman baked in the August sun. And, lying deep and cool, looking up, up through the dim echoing tunnel of well, Cecy heard the iron suction of the pump handle depressed energetically by a sweating old lady; and water, amœba, Cecy and all rose up the throat of the well in sudden cool disgorgement, out into the cup, over which waited sun-withered lips. Then and only then did Cecy withdraw, just as the lips came down, the cup tilted, and porcelain met porcelain—

Jonn stumbled, fell flat upon the creek waters!

He did not rise, but sat, dripping, staring stupidly. Then he began crashing rocks over, shouting, seizing upon and losing crayfish, cursing. The bells began ringing louder in his ears and now, one by one, a

procession of things that couldn't exist, but seemed to be real, drifted by on the creek surface. Worm-white bodies, turned on their backs, drifting like loose marionettes. As they passed, the tide turned them over and they had the face of the typical Elliott family member.

Now he began to weep, sitting there in the water. He had wanted Cecy's help, but now how could he expect to get it, acting like a fool, cursing her, hating her, threatening her?

He stood up, shaking himself. He walked out of the creek and up the hill. There was only one thing to do now. Plead with individual members of the family. Ask them to intercede for him. Have them ask Cecy to come home, quickly.

IN THE undertaking establishment on Court Avenue, the door opened, closed. The undertaker, a short, well-tonsored man with a mustache and sensitively thin hands, looked up. His face fell.

"Oh, it's you, Jonn," he said.

"Timothy," said Jonn, still wet from the creek, "I need your help. Have—have you seen Cecy?"

"Seen her?" The undertaker leaned against the marble slab where he was working over a body. He laughed. "God, you ask me that," he snorted. "*Look* at me, look at me *close*. Do you know me?"

Jonn bristled. "You're Timothy!"

The undertaker shook his head. "I'm Bion. I'm Bion, the butcher. Yes, the butcher." His eyes gleamed. He raised his hand to his head. "Here, inside, where it counts, I'm Bion. I was working in my refrigerator room this morning when suddenly Cecy was inside me. She borrowed my mind, like a cup of sugar. And brought me here and sifted me down inside Timothy's body. Poor Timothy! What a joke!"

"You're not Timothy!"

"No, ah, no, dear Uncle Jonn. Cecy probably put Timothy's mind in *my* body! You see the jest? A meat-cutter exchanged for a meat-cutter! A dealer in cold-cuts traded for another of the same!" And he quaked with laughter. "Ah, that Cecy, what a child." He wiped happy tears from his face. "I've stood here an hour or so wondering what to do. You know something? Undertaking isn't hard. Not much harder than fixing pot roasts! Oh, Timothy'll be mad. Cecy'll probably trade us back, later. Timothy never was one to take a joke!"

Jonn looked confused. "You—even *you* can't control Cecy?"

"Gods, no, man. She plays her jokes where she will. We're helpless."

Jonn turned away and went to the door. "I've got to find her somehow. If she can do this to you, think how she could help me if she wanted." The bells rang louder in his ears. From the corner of his eyes a movement caught his attention. He whirled and gasped.

The body on the table had a cedar-stake driven through it!

"*Okay*, good-bye," said the undertaker to the slammed door. He listened to the sound of Jonn's running feet, fading.

THE man who staggered into the police station at seven that evening was barely able to hold himself up. His voice was only a whisper and he trembled violently as if he had taken poison. He did not look like Uncle Jonn any more. The bells were ringing all the time now and he kept imagining that people were walking behind him, a dozen people, who vanished, whenever he turned and looked.

The sheriff looked up from reading a magazine, wiped his brown mustache with the back of one claw-like hand, took his feet down off a battered desk and waited for Jonn to speak.

"I want to report," whispered Uncle Jonn slowly. "I want to report a family that lives here. An—unhealthy family, living under false pretenses."

The sheriff cleared his throat. "What's the name of the family?"

Jonn stopped. "What?"

The sheriff repeated it: "What's the family's name?"

"Your voice," said Jonn

"What about my voice?" said the sheriff.

"It sounds familiar," said Jonn. "It sounds like—"

"Who?" asked the sheriff.

"You sound like Cecy's *mother!* That's who you sound like!"

"Do I?" asked the sheriff.

"That's who you are, inside! Cecy

changed you, *too*, like she changed Bion and Timothy! I can't report the Family to you, now, then! It wouldn't do any good!"

"I guess it wouldn't," said the sheriff, implacably.

"The Family's gotten around me!" cried Uncle Jonn. "They anticipated me!"

"Looks that way," said the sheriff, wetting a pencil on his tongue and starting a fresh crossword puzzle. "Well, good day to you, Jonn Elliott," he said.

"Unh?"

"I said good day."

"Good day." Jonn stood there, listening. "Do you—do you hear anything?"

The sheriff listened. "Crickets?"

"No."

"Frogs?"

"No," said Jonn. "Just bells. Holy church bells. The kind of bells a man like me can't stand to hear. Holy church bells."

The sheriff listened. "No, can't say as I hear 'em. Say, be careful of that door there; it slams."

THE door to Cecy's room was flung open, a moment later Jonn was inside, moving across the floor. The silent body of Cecy lay upon the bed, not moving. Behind him, as Jonn seized Cecy's hand, her mother appeared.

She ran to him, struck him on his head and shoulders until he fell away from Cecy. The world swelled with bell sounds. His vision blacked out. He groped outward at the mother, biting his lips, releasing them in gasps, eyes streaming.

"Please, please, tell her to come back," he said. "I'm sorry. I don't want to hurt any one any more."

The mother shouted through the clamor of bells.

"Go downstairs. Wait there for her!"

"I can't hear you," he cried, louder. "My head." He held his hands to his ears. "So loud, so loud. I can't stand it." He rocked on his heels. "If only I knew where Cecy was—"

Quite simply he drew out a folded knife, unclasped it.

"I can't go on—" he said.

Before the mother moved he fell to the floor, the knife in his heart, blood running from his lips, his shoes looking senseless

DRAW for MONEY

Be An ARTIST!

Trained Artists Are Capable of Earning $30 - $50 - $75 A WEEK

Learn At Home In Your Spare Time for A Fascinating Hobby and Profitable Art Career!

It's pleasant and interesting to study Art the W.S.A. way. COMMERCIAL ART, DESIGNING and CARTOONING — all in ONE complete course. No previous Art experience necessary—we teach you step by step—hundreds have profited by our practical method since 1914. TWO ART OUTFITS FURNISHED. FREE BOOK "Art for Pleasure & Profit"—tells all about our course, describes our method of instruction—what our graduates say—and commercial opportunities for you in Art.

FREE BOOK gives details!

WASHINGTON SCHOOL OF ART
Studio 312C, 1115 15th St., N. W., Wash. 5, D. C.

Send me your booklet and full particulars about your course.

Name ..... Age.....

Address .....

City ..... State.....

Genuine Diamond

"Perfect Matched Wedding Set"
SOLID GOLD — MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE.

A charming "Matched Wedding Set" that we are offering for a limited time at the LOW price of $12.95, or either ring separately only $6.95 plus tax. If for ANY reason you are not satisfied after wearing these rings 10 days—return them and your money will be refunded. As supply is low—ORDER AT ONCE. Lovely gift box FREE. Send NO MONEY—pay postman plus postal fee. Tax extra. Right Sparkling DIAMONDS.

VICTORY DIAMOND COMPANY
Dept. MF-12, Wheeling, W. Virginia

Learn Profitable Profession in 90 days at Home

MEN AND WOMEN, 18 TO 50—Many Swedish Massage graduates make $50, $75 or even more per week. Large full time incomes from doctors, hospitals, sanatoriums, clubs or private practice. Others make good money in spare time. You can win independence and prepare for future security by training at home and qualifying for Diploma. Anatomy Charts and 32-page Illustrated Book FREE—Now! THE College of Swedish Massage, Dept. 612-B, 100 E. Ohio St., Chicago 11, Ill.

ANY BOOK IN PRINT!

Delivered at your door. We pay postage. Standard authors, new books, popular editions, fiction, reference, medical, mechanical, children's books, etc. —all at guaranteed savings. Send card now for Clarkson's 1948 Catalog.

FREE Write for our great illustrated book catalog. A short course in literature. The buying guide of 300,000 book lovers, FREE if you write NOW—TODAY!

CLARKSON PUBLISHING COMPANY
Dept. MW-48 1253 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago 5, Ill.

USED Correspondence Courses

Complete HOME-STUDY Courses and self-instruction books, slightly used. Rented, sold, exchanged. All subjects. Satisfaction guaranteed. Cash paid for used courses. Full details and 92-page illustrated bargain catalog Free. Write now.

NELSON COMPANY
1139 So. Wabash Avenue, Dept. S-22, Chicago 5, Ill.

one atop the other. One of his eyes was shut, the other wide and glittering.

The mother bent down to him. "Dead," she whispered, finally. "So," she murmured, unbelieving. Rising up, she stepped away from the moving blood. "So he's dead at last," she said. She glanced about, fearfully, and cried aloud. "Cecy, come home, child, I need you!"

A silence, while the sunlight drained from the room.

"Cecy, come home, child!"

The dead man's lips parted. Cecy's high, clear voice sprang from them:

"Here, mother! I've been here for days! I'm the fear he had in him; and he never guessed. Tell Father what I've done; perhaps he'll think me worthy now—"

The dead man's lips stopped.

A moment later, Cecy's body on the bed stiffened like a stocking with a leg thrust suddenly into it, inhabited again.

"Supper, mother," said Cecy, rising from bed.

Forgetful Hour

By YETZA GILLESPIE

WHEN time wears thin
As the shadows lying,
And the whippoorwills call
For the souls of the dying,

When the bitter moon wears
A star on her horns,
And the heart in your breast
Remembers thorns,

Be wise, and touch iron!
Put salt on your bread,
Lest some of the Ancient
Forget they are dead.

Re: Twice Cursed

THE way that Seabury Quinn and Manly Wade Wellman chat in their stories about meeting each other and consulting each other and so forth, made us feel as if we should say that Quinn came into the office and remarked that he'd met Wellman on the street and he'd asked him to give us the following letter about Wellman's story in WEIRD TALES. As a matter of fact, however, Wellman came in himself unannounced by Quinn and left us some interesting notes about *Twice Cursed* — the story, not the weather or editors and authors in general. Wellman said:

Truth is so completely universal that it seems logical to suspect universality of containing truth. Others have touched on beliefs that bob up in every land, culture and age—lycanthropy, vampirism, organized demonolatry. But as universal a legend as any, and perhaps it is not a legend, is that of the ghostly double, more real than ordinary nature can supply, and the tremendous results that follow one's coming face to face with such a living mirror. Plenty has been written about the *doppelganger*—read Edgar Allan Poe, Fiona MacLeod and Anthony Hope for some of the best. For two beings to have the same aspect is as frightening, perhaps, as for one being to have two aspects.

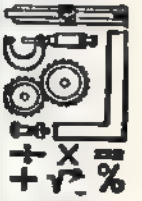
Some things in this story—*Twice Cursed* —actually happened. Other things are varnished, to make them shine a little brighter as fiction. One need not seek too painstakingly in New York for a bookshop like the Spoom, though under a different name, and

SUCCESS!

How to Get Along in this World

Here, gathered together for the first time, are 600 gems of worldly wisdom on how to live joyously, successfully . . . how to handle people, make money, be happy. Written out of actual experience by the best brains of mankind . . . during the past four thousand years! To-the-point, workable instructions on getting ahead. Only $1, included are lessons on how to use these quotations in your daily life. Clip and mail coupon below for FREE details today.

Short-Cut Mathematics
COMBINED WITH
Practical Mechanics Simplified



Be a "master mind." Learn how to juggle figures, do baffling tricks with numbers. Add long columns of figures this lightning-quick, short-cut way. Multiply 4 figures by 4 figures without old-fashioned multiplication. Here are speedy, simplified systems used by stage "wizards," expert accountants, engineers. Only $1. Course includes illustrations, problems, answers. Mail coupon below!

SUPER JU JITSU

Now...get tough DOUBLE-quick!

Fear no man. The bigger they come the harder they fall. Super Ju Jitsu is easy to learn. Big illustrated self-instruction course shows you how to disarm, disable and capture an armed attacker—with only your bare hands! Get amazing details at once—mail coupon below.

CARTOONING MADE EASY

New Self-Instruction Course

Learn how to draw funny pictures for money—caricature, comic strip, gag-cartoon, political and editorial cartoon, etc. Practical simplified method takes out all the mystery. Step-by-step lessons for home-study. Excellent SPARE-TIME training for pleasure and profit. FREE interesting details on request. Just send name and address on coupon below.

LEARN HOW TO HYPNOTIZE

Amazing lessons in simple, easy to understand language. How to select a subject—how to hypnotize by telephone — how to make money from hypnotism—mental telepathy—stage hypnotism—self hypnosis, how to use modern hypnotism to conquer inferiority complex, timidity, etc. Clear helpful pictures show operating positions, movements. Startling low price. Mail coupon for complete information—FREE.

how to write better letters

Make your letters CLICK! Learn to put warmth and sparkle into business and social correspondence. Practical brass-tacks instruction on writing successful job-getting application letters, exciting keen-witted friendly letters, etc. ACTUAL EXAMPLES show tested ways of packing your letters with wisdom. Fascinating details on request . . . FREE. Just mail coupon below today!

NELSON CO., Dept. 2823, 321 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago 4, Ill.

Write today for complete details on any of these SELF-INSTRUCTION COURSES. Send coupon below for the world-famous copyrighted Success-Catalog—It's FREE, on request.

FREE details . . . mail coupon!

NELSON CO., Dept. 2823, 321 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago 4, Ill.
Please send me FREE and without obligation—Illustrated Success-Catalog, containing information about the courses (or courses) I have circled below. No salesman will call.

- Success!
- Short-Cut Mathematics
- Super Ju Jitsu
- Cartooning Made Easy
- How to Hypnotize
- How to Write Better Letters

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

CITY..... STATE.....

When PRAYER FAILS

The prayers of the most worthy people often fail. Why? The unworthy often have the greatest health, success, riches and happiness. The best, smartest, and most industrious people often have only pain, poverty and sorrow. Why? Thirty years ago, in Forbidden Tibet, behind the highest mountains in the world, a young Englishman found the answers to these questions. His eyes were opened by the strangest mystic he met during his twenty-one years of travels in the Far East. Sick then, he regained health. Poor then, he acquired wealth and world-wide professional honors. He wants to tell the whole world what he learned, and offers to send a 9,000-word treatise, FREE, to everyone who asks promptly. It is a first step to the POWER that KNOWLEDGE gives. There is no obligation. Write for YOUR FREE COPY today.
INSTITUTE of MENTALPHYSICS, Dept. U-137
213 South Hobart Blvd., Los Angeles 4, Calif.

PRINT ANY PHOTO
on Paper, Cloth, Leather or Wood
SIMPLE, EASY TO USE
Magic liquid takes only 2 minutes to reproduce any snapshot you have on to stationery, handkerchiefs, ties, scarfs, etc. Won't wash off. Won't hurt negative or fabric it's used on. Personalize your belongings! An ideal gift. Complete outfit with full colors included, enough for 100 photos—*only $1.00* postpaid. Sent C.O.D. for $1.21.
CHRISTY PHOTO SUPPLY
Dept. 1212 2835 N. Central, Chicago

TOMBSTONES
DIRECT TO YOU $9.95 up EASY Terms
Genuine Beautiful Rockdale Monuments, Markers. Satisfaction or MONEY BACK. Freight paid. Write for our FREE Catalog and compare prices.
ROCKDALE MONUMENT CO.
Dept. 813 JOLIET, ILLINOIS

STOP Scratching
Relieve Itch in a Jiffy
Sufferers from the torturing itch caused by eczema, pimples, scales, scabies, athlete's foot, "factory" itch, and other itch troubles, are praising cooling, liquid **D.D.D. Prescription.** This time-proved medication—developed by Dr. D.D.Dennis—positively relieves that cruel, burning itch. Greaseless and stainless. Soothes and comforts even the most intense itching in a jiffy. A 35c trial bottle proves its merits or your money back. Ask your druggist today for **D. D. D. Prescription.**

LAW
STUDY AT HOME for Personal Success and Larger Earnings. 36 years expert instruction — over 108,000 students enrolled. LL.B. Degree awarded. All text material furnished. Easy payment plan. Send for FREE BOOK—"Law and Executive Guidance," NOW!
AMERICAN EXTENSION SCHOOL OF LAW
Dept. 62-N, 646 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 11, Ill.

find the books there that are mentioned in this account. For translations from the Icelandic I am chiefly indebted to Leon Minshall, and the magic and counter-magic are mostly charms from my often-used and often-quoted Albertus Magnus, as done into English more than a hundred years ago. Other books, unfortunately, do not need translation.

It is strange and probably unfortunate that we must go to Iceland, that remote land that the ancients thought was Thule, the nation of wizards, for the only comprehensive account of the medieval *Svartaskoli*. It may well be that there was only one such institution in all time and space, and that St. Jon Ognurdson was the only scholar who backslid from its teachings and turned normal and wholesome again; but I venture to suggest that many such schools existed and do exist. Father Montague Summers traces them in South America today, an active and baleful influence, and several of us are sure that the frightened children who testified in the Salem witch-trials had been started in the primary grades of a similar institution.

It does not pay us to accept all of these things unless we have seen them face to awful face, as has, for instance, John Thunstone. Life today has enough of accepted terrors and woes without searching out others, and perhaps the fight against entrenched and organized black magic is best left in the hands of Thunstone and his few but determined helpers. He likes to be kept busy, and he shall be kept busy.

Even if he deals with those traitors to the human race who worship in the wrong temples, there are always the Shonokins.

Manly Wade Wellman

Incidentally, Wellman announced that an idea was germinating for another Thunstone story, and we gave the go-ahead nod. The customers seem to like him, said we.

Jonahs and Sich

ANOTHER good friend of WEIRD TALES dropped us a few lines about his story in this issue—Emil Petaja anent *The Jonah*. Our correspondence tends sometimes to be more interplanetary than international, or na-

tional, but we found Mr. Petaja's letter very interesting:

In writing a story wherein a main character is made an object of fear and horror because of his nationality I realize that I am letting myself wide open to justifiable criticism. But, wait!

Martin Suva, in my story, is a Finn. So am I a Finn! (By ancestry; I was born in Montana.) Long winter evenings I listened to strange and wonderful tales, as a child at my mother's knee, *Suomi* tales of how Wainomoinen forged the sky and how Ilmarinen fashioned a maiden of gold with his song-magic. These were my earliest "weird tales."

And so I have an abiding love and respect for my parents' people—for their honesty and great courage, for their great literature and even greater music, and—need I go on?

Nevertheless and notwithstanding, the idea that a Finn was a Jonah was, in old days, an actuality. Look it up. And if you want to read a very fascinating chapter on the Finns as a dark and mysterious race of magicians "who can control the storm," read Cecil Gray's biography of Jean Sibelius, the symphonist acknowledged by most critics as the greatest living.

I have always thought *Suomi* legends (which concern themselves much with the *elements*) are just as fascinating as the Greek or Hindu or any other; and I'm going to delve further, employing material from them in stories. Hope you like the idea. . .

Emil Petaja

READERS' VOTE

TWICE CURSED	DEAD MAN'S SHOES
THE MAN IN CRESCENT TERRACE	OHANU
THE BODY MAN WILL GET YOU	THE JONAH
	TUNNEL TERROR
	THE TRAVELLER

Here's a list of eight stories in this issue. Won't you let us know which three you consider the best? Just place the numbers: 1, 2, and 3 respectively against your three favorite tales—then clip it out and send it to us.

WEIRD TALES

9 Rockefeller Plaza New York City 20, N. Y.

The Steady Pay Profession
Good Times or Bad!

SCIENTIFIC CRIME DETECTION

It Is Easy to Learn!

I will teach you this fascinating science during your spare time at home. It pays to be an expert in finger printing, Firearms Identification, Police Photography and Secret Service Methods. I have trained hundreds of men and women now successfully serving in identification bureaus throughout America. You, too, may quickly fit yourself to become a well-paid salaried officer of the law, often sharing in the generous rewards offered for wanted criminals.

FREE! "BLUE BOOK OF CRIME"

This book is full of exciting information on scientific crime detection. It tells how you can get started in a grand career. Now, at amazingly low cost. Clip coupon Now...Mail it today.

53 PER CENT

of all Identification Bureaus in the U.S. employ students and graduates of I. A. S. A majority of these men are heads of bureaus. Many of them knew nothing about crime detection before training with me. Now they have steady jobs, good salaries and a fine future. Write today for full particulars and free book. Give age.

INSTITUTE OF APPLIED SCIENCE
1920 Sunnyside Ave., Dept. 1562, Chicago 40, Ill.

INSTITUTE OF APPLIED SCIENCE
1920 Sunnyside Ave., Dept. 1562, Chicago 40

Gentlemen: Without any obligation on my part, send me the "Blue Book of Crime," and complete list of Identification Bureaus employing your students or graduates, together with your low prices and Easy Terms Offer. (Literature will be sent ONLY to persons stating their age.)

Name.....

Address.....

..... Age.....

Now for EVERY WORK SHOP!
"NEW Invention" Electroplates by BRUSH

Easy to Plate CHROMIUM GOLD, SILVER, NICKEL, COPPER
... For Pleasure and Profit!

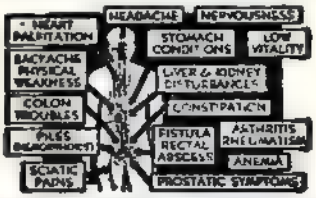
If you have a workshop—at home or in business—you need this new Warner Electroplater. At the stroke of an electrified brush, you can electroplate models and projects—you can replate worn articles, faucets, tools, fixtures, silverware, etc. with a durable, sparkling coat of metal . . . Gold, Silver, Chromium, Nickel, Copper or Cadmium. Method is easy, simple, quick. Everything furnished—equipment complete, ready for use. *By doing a bit of work for others, your machine can pay for itself within a week.* So make your shop complete by getting a Warner Electroplater right away. Send today for FREE SAMPLE and illustrated literature. ACT AT ONCE! *Mail Coupon.*

WARNER ELECTRIC CO., DEPT. C-40
663 North Wells, Chicago 10, Illinois

FREE Details & Sample!

WARNER ELECTRIC CO., 663 N. Wells, Chicago 10, Dept. C-40
Gentlemen: Send Free Sample and Details to:
Name .....
Address .....
City ..... State.....

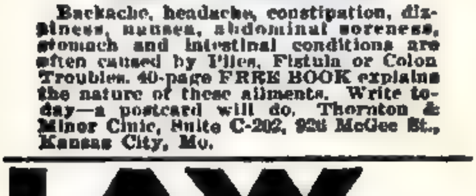
ACCOUNTANT
BECOME AN EXPERT
Executive Accountants and C. P. A.'s earn $...,000 to $10,000 a year. Thousands of firms need them. We train you thoroly at home in spare time for C. P. A. examinations or executive accounting positions. Previous experience unnecessary. Personal training under supervision of staff of C. P. A.'s. Placement counsel and help. Write for free book, "Accountancy, the Profession That Pays."
LASALLE Extension University, 417 So. Dearborn St.
A Correspondence Institution, Dept. 275-H, Chicago 5, Ill.

Dangers of
Rectal Troubles
FREE BOOK—Explains Many Associated Conditions


Backache, headache, constipation, dizziness, nausea, abdominal soreness, stomach and intestinal conditions are often caused by Piles, Fistula or Colon Troubles. 40-page FREE BOOK explains the nature of these ailments. Write today—a postcard will do. Thornton & Minor Clinic, Suite C-202, 926 McGee St., Kansas City, Mo.

LAW...
STUDY AT HOME Legally trained men win higher positions and bigger success in business and public life. Greater opportunities now than ever before. More Ability: More Prestige: More Money We guide you step by step. You can train at home during spare time. Degree of LL.B. We furnish all text material, including 14-volume Law Library. Low cost, easy terms. Get our valuable 48-page "Law Training for Leadership" and "Evidence" books FREE. Send for them NOW.
LASALLE EXTENSION UNIVERSITY, 417 South Dearborn Street
A Correspondence Institution, Dept. 275-L, Chicago 5, Ill.

High School Course at Home
•Many Finish in 2 Years
Go as rapidly as your time and abilities permit. Course equivalent to resident school work—prepares for college entrance exams. Standard H.S. texts supplied. Diploma. Credit for H. S. subjects already completed. Single subjects if desired. High school education is very important for advancement in business and industry and socially. Don't be handicapped all your life. Be a High School graduate. Start your training now. Free Bulletin on request. No obligation.
American School, Dept. H-239, Drexel at 58th, Chicago 37


Premiums GIVEN!
Send No Money Now!
Send name and address! Girls! Boys! Ladies! Attractive Wrist Watches with face smaller than a dime, rings, dishes, jewelry; other personal and household premiums or CASH COMMISSION easily yours! SIMPLY give colorful pictures with [redacted] Brand SALVE for chafes and mild burns sold to friends at 25¢ a box (with popular picture) and remit amounts stated for premium wanted, as explained in catalog sent with order, postage paid by us. Our 51st year. Write for trial order of salve and pictures on trust to start.
WILSON CHEM. CO., Dept. 81-49, TYRONE, PA.

WEIRD TALES CLUB

9 Rockefeller Plaza,
New York 20,
N. Y.

Write to MARTIN WARE, SECRETARY

• This is your club—a medium to help you and other fantasy and science-fiction fans get together. Readers wanted it—they wrote in telling us how much they would enjoy meeting others of similar tastes.

• Membership is very simple: just drop us a line, so that we can enroll you on the club roster, and publish your name and address in the magazine.

• A membership card carrying the above design—personal token of your fellowship with the weird and the fantastic—will be sent on request. (A stamped, addressed envelope should be enclosed.)

NEW MEMBERS

John Jesmont, 40 Newarthill Rd., Carfin by Motherwell, Lanarkshire, Scotland
Mrs. M. E. Medler, 833 S. Cory St., Findlay, Ohio
W. H. Meugden, S 1/c, Co. 412, N.T.S., Hugh Manley Sch., Chicago, Illinois
Ray C. Jungman, 202 Henning St., Fond du Lac, Wis.
Richard Campbell, 680 S. Richardson Ave., Columbus, Ohio
Dottie Lee, 1213 So. Tamarind St., Compton, California
Hazel Sierman, Kaw City, Box 364, Oklahoma
Frances Johnson, P. O. Box 8584, Houston 9, Texas
Lt. Robert Hammack, 421 Ord. Evac. Co., Fort Bragg, North Carolina
David Cale, 1326 So. Waco, Wichita 11, Kansas
James Bethke, 11 Dixwell Ave., New Haven 11, Conn.
Solomon A. Kaplan, 3204 Holland Ave., New York 67, New York
Sandra Fradkin, 1300 E. 9th St., Brooklyn 30, N. Y.
Judith Seldman, 805 Avenue O, Brooklyn 30, New York
Alex Christelis, 22 Webber Road, Germiston, T. V. L., South Africa
Bernard McFadden, Engine 20, Solvay & W. Jefferson, Detroit, Michigan
Mrs. Mamie Minuette, 1916 E. 26th St., Kansas City, Missouri
John Cockroft, 4 Winship Ave., San Anselmo, Cal.
Vera Cole, 2016 Cornell St., Des Moines 13, Iowa
Richard M. Crandall, Malden, West Virginia
Nolan L. Bookout, 313 S. Elliott St., Muncie, Indiana
Clarence Janiskee, 703 16th St., Bay City, Michigan
Janet Verla Anne MacPherson, 1217 A. St., Abbotsford, B. C., Canada
R. Waldheim, 5510 Hudson Ave., West New York, N. J.
Wayne Smith, P. O. Box 2882, Sheridan Station, Bremerton, Washington
Dorothy Woods, 49 Kennedy St., Hartford 5, Conn.
Jack Dinsfriend, 148 Sutherland Road, Brighton 46, Massachusetts
Virginia Holmes, Pleasant St., South Eliot, Maine
Anne Ippolita Chowning, 2110 Country Club Lane, Little Rock, Arkansas
Rob Kolski, 1632 W. 6th St., Ashtabula, Ohio
Ens. Kenneth Elkin, Headquarters 17th Nav. Dist. (Comm.), Kodiak, Alaska
Bryant Jones, Jr., 678 Ardmore Ave., Ardmore, Pa.
Pfc. Robert Anderson, "G" Co., 182 Inf., A.P.O. 716, c/o Postmaster, San Francisco, California

Pfc. Robert A. Sakshaug, "G" Co., 183 Inf., A.P.O. 716, c/o Pm., San Francisco, California
Pfc. John F. Allen, "G" Co., 182 Inf., A.P.O. 716, c/o Pm., San Francisco, California
Pfc. Thomas K. Oriadberg, "G" Co., 182 Inf., A.P.O. 716, c/o Pm., San Francisco, California
Ted Sayte, 190 Dewey St., Worcester 3, Massachusetts
Catherine Moore, Blacksburg, Virginia
Martha V. Robertson, 2100 McKenzie Ave., Waco, Texas
Adele Liquorman, 2924 80th St., Brooklyn 4, N. Y.
Isaman Field 11, 208 W. Giddens, Tampa 3, Florida
Richard D. Lockwood, 339 E. 74th St., New York, N. Y.
Tom Pickens, 44 Fairview Street, Yonkers 3, N. Y.
Jack Finch, 95 North Broad, Pennsgrove, New Jersey
Mrs. Dale F. McBride, 501 So. Alexandria Ave., Los Angeles, California
J. Russell Mars, P. O. Box 577, Packanack Lake, N. J.
James Pullman, 834 Edison, Detroit, Michigan
Louis E. Catusco, S 2/c, U. S. Naval Hospital, T-10, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
James Reagan, Route 1, Box 8A, Tempe, Arizona
Paul Poste, 4513 Avenue K, Brooklyn, New York
Charles Eddy, 8 Leroy St., Dorchester, Massachusetts
Kay Eddy, 8 Leroy St., Dorchester, Massachusetts
Robert Foy, 8 Leroy St., Dorchester, Massachusetts
Irene Foy, 8 Leroy St., Dorchester, Massachusetts
Pfc. Carl Goldsworthy, 15814123, Sad. M., 4000 A.A.F.B.U. (A.B.), Wright Field, Dayton, Ohio
Benjamin Franklin Warner, 19 East Pine St., Audubon, New Jersey
Evelyn E. Horstig, 59-12 Woodbine St., Brooklyn 27, New York
Harry J. Leyland, Post Office Department, Mechanicville, New York
Allan Weinstein, 588 Audubon Ave., New York 33, N. Y.
Robert Sperling, 73-44 163 St., Flushing, New York
T. Earl VanSickle, Jr., Super-Exchange, Cranford, New Jersey
Warren H. Merritt, "Rockhaven," Sheridan, Montana
Pfc. Vincent L. Trunda, 30830873, Sqn. "G," 1503rd A.A.F.B.U., Hamilton Field, California
James A. Williams, 731 Sugg St., Madisonville, Ky.
Joseph Serson, 214 15th St., Jersey City, New Jersey
Van H. Spiawn, 5201 Burlight Ave., St. Louis 8, Mo.
M. Scholz, 336 East 158th St., Bronx, New York
Jack Reeves, 303 R. R. 2nd St., Loogootee, Indiana
Pvt. James L. Cribelar, A.S.N., 450-18-382, Hq. & Hq. Co., Personnel Section, Separation Center, Camp Atterbury, Indiana
Lucile Thompson Kraft, 2732 N. Clark St., Apt. 5, Chicago, Illinois
Hazel Walters, Box 674, Leechburg, Pennsylvania
Cpl. William Okvit, Co. B, 30th Engrs., Base Topo. Bn., A.P.O. 967, c/o Pm., San Francisco, California
Cecelia Ryan, 971 McClelland Ave., Columbus 3, Ohio
E. Augustus DuBert, Victory Heights, Horseheads, New York
Clayton V. Coble, 824 East Broadway, Enid, Oklahoma
James Otis Gail Ward, 2009 W. Broadway, Louisville, Kentucky
Margie Ford, 79 Lafayette Ave., Sea Cliff, Long Island, New York
Edael Heath, Adamsville, Tennessee
Marjorie Evans, 136 So. Main St., Carbondale, Pa.
Lt. B. E. Blair, 6962 Riverside Drive, Berwyn, Illinois
Vincent Demm, 12 Roosevelt St., New York, N. Y.
Sally Goldstein, 2068 76th St., Brooklyn 14, N. Y.
William Woods, Jr., 4031 N. Market St., St. Louis 12, Mo.
Edward M. Plewucha, 90 Burgard Pl., Buffalo 11, N. Y
Lillian H. Luehrs, Madison Square Hotel, 37 Madison Ave., New York 10, N. Y.
Mrs. Cearie M. Barrett, 7 Maitland St., Halifax, N. S., Can.
Donald Sweany, Jr., 617 Murdock Rd., Baltimore 12, Md.
Emile E. Greenleaf, Jr., 1303 Mystery St., New Orleans 19, La.
Edward Thomas Conlon, 243 Haladay St., Jersey City 4, N. J.
Helen A. Lasky, Box 151, Rt. 1, Kenosha, Wisc.
Mr. and Mrs. Louis Smith, 1203 Fulton Ave., New York 56, N. Y.
Ida M. Router, 151 Blucker St., Toronto, Ont., Can.
Faythe Willis, 128 Yurnu Ave., Hazel Park, Mich.
Benjamin Lerner, 2612 South 7th St., Philadelphia, Pa.
Charles S. Eyer, Box 445, Paducah, Ky.
Albert Hasty, 6069 Buena Vista Ave., Oakland 11, Calif.
Tommy Kushner, Jr., Box 205, Moon Run, Pa.
Joe Germain, 1021 Old Post Rd., Mamaroneck, N. Y.
Owen Campbell Mortimer, 1 Flat "Glenview," Cammeray Rd., Cammeray, N.S.W., Australia

We're sorry that lack of space prevents the inclusion of the names of all New Members. The rest will appear next time.

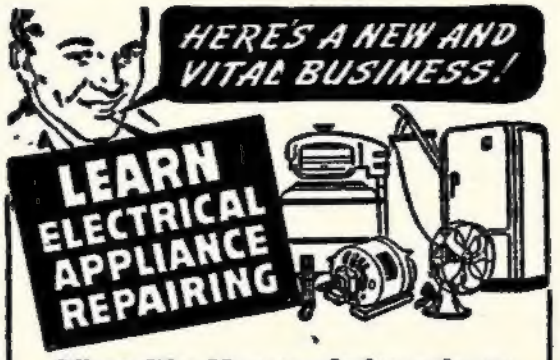
Lemon Juice Recipe Checks Rheumatic Pain Quickly

If you suffer from rheumatic, arthritis or neuritis pain, try this simple inexpensive home recipe that thousands are using. Get a package of Ru-Ex Compound, a two-week supply, today. Mix it with a quart of water, add the juice of 4 lemons. It's easy. No trouble at all and pleasant. You need only 3 tablespoonfuls two times a day. Often within 48 hours—sometimes overnight—splendid results are obtained. If the pains do not quickly leave and if you do not feel better, return the empty package and Ru-Ex will cost you nothing to try as it is sold by your druggist under an absolute money-back guarantee. Ru-Ex Compound is for sale and recommended by druggists everywhere. Druggists everywhere.

do you WORRY?

Why worry and suffer any longer if we can help you? Try a Brooks Patented Air Cushion. This marvelous appliance for most forms of reducible rupture is GUARANTEED to bring YOU heavenly comfort and security—day and night—at work and play—or it costs you NOTHING. Thousands happy. Light, neat-fitting. No hard pads or springs. For men, women, and children. Durable, cheap. Sent on trial to prove it. Not sold in stores. Beware of imitations. Write for Free Book on Rupture, no-risk trial order plan, and proof of results. All Correspondence Confidential.

Brooks Company, 351 State St., Marshall, Mich.



Offers Big Money—Independence

If you are mechanically inclined—can hold and use tools it will pay you to learn electrical appliance repairing. Operate from your garage, basement, etc. Work as many hours as you wish—the appliance repairman is his own boss. On many types of repairs it is usual for a repairman to charge on the basis of $5.00 to $6.00 an hour!

No Previous Experience Needed

Profusely illustrated our new course shows you in simple, easy to understand language plus drawings and photographs, how to make each repair on refrigerators, vacuum cleaners, washing machines, motors, fans, irons, etc., etc. Explains and gives you a working knowledge of electricity, welding, nickel plating, etc. Shows you how to build the power tools you need and how to solicit and keep business coming to you. Not a theory course but an honest to goodness practical course written by and used by repairmen the country over. Price of course is so low that the savings on your own household appliances will pay for it. Act NOW! Send today for FREE literature. Christy Supply Co., 2836 N. Central Ave., Dept. D-512, Chicago 34, Illinois.

WEIRD BOOKS RENTED

Books by Lovecraft, Merritt, Quinn, etc., rented by mail. 3c a day plus postage. Write for free list. WEREWOLF LENDING LIBRARY, 7208 Troxell Blvd., Pittsburgh, Pa.

The Magic of Mind

WERE the great personages of the past victims of a stupendous hoax? Could such eminent men of the ancient world as Socrates, Pericles, and Alexander the Great have been deluded and cast under the spell of witchcraft—or did the oracles whom they consulted actually possess *a mysterious faculty of foresight?* That *the human mind can truly exert an influence over things and conditions* was not a credulous belief of the ancients, but a known and demonstrable fact to them. That there exists a wealth of infinite knowledge just beyond the border of our daily thoughts, which can be aroused and commanded at will, was not a fantasy of these sages of antiquity, but a dependable aid to which they turned in time of need.

It is time you realized that the rites, rituals and practices of the ancients were not superstitions, but subterfuges to conceal the marvelous workings of natural law from those who would have misused them. Telepathy, projection of thought, the materializing of ideas into helpful realities, are no longer thought by intelligent persons to be impossible practices, but instead, *demonstrable sciences,* by which a greater life of happiness may be had.

One of America's foremost psychologists and university instructors, says of his experiments with thought transference and the powers of mind—"The successes were much too numerous to be merely lucky hits and one can see no way for guessing to have accounted for the results." *Have you* that open-minded attitude of today which warrants a clear, positive revelation of the facts of mind which intolerance and bigotry have suppressed for years? *Advance with the times;* learn the truth about your inherited powers.

Let this free book explain

The Rosicrucians (NOT a religious organization) have been leaders in introducing the ancient wisdom of mental phenomena. Established throughout the world for centuries, they have for ages expounded these truths to those thinking men and women who sought to make the utmost of their natural faculties. Use the coupon below—avail yourself of a pleasing book of interesting information which explains how you may acquire this most *unusual* and *helpful knowledge.*

The ROSICRUCIANS
(AMORC)

USE THIS COUPON

Scribe J. A. J.
The Rosicrucians, AMORC,
San Jose, California.
I am sincerely interested in knowing more about this unseen, vital power which can be used in acquiring the fullness and happiness of life. Please send me, without cost, the book, "THE MASTERY OF LIFE," which tells me how to receive this information.

Name _____

Address _____ State _____

What's My Job?—I Manufacture Weaklings into MEN!

GIVE ME a skinny, pepless, second-rate body — and I'll cram it so full of handsome, bulging new muscle that your friends will grow bug-eyed! . . . I'll wake up that sleeping energy of yours and make it hum like a high-powered motor! Man, you'll ***feel*** and ***look*** different! You'll begin to ***LIVE!***

Charles Atlas

Actual Photograph of the man who holds the title "The World's Most Perfectly Developed Man."

Let Me Make YOU a NEW MAN —IN JUST 15 MINUTES A DAY!

You wouldn't believe it, but I myself used to be a 97-lb. weakling. Fellows called me "Skinny." Girls snickered and made fun of me behind my back. I was a flop. THEN I discovered my marvelous new muscle-building system—"*Dynamic Tension*." And it turned me into such a *complete* specimen of MANHOOD that today I hold the title "THE WORLD'S MOST PERFECTLY DEVELOPED MAN."

That's how I traded in my "bag of bones" for a barrel of muscle! And I felt so much better, so much *on top of the world* in my big, new, husky body, that I decided to devote my whole life to helping *other* fellows change themselves into "perfectly developed men."

What Is "Dynamic Tension"? How Does It Work?

When you look in the mirror and see a healthy, husky, strapping fellow smiling back at you—then you'll be astounded at how *short* a time it takes "*Dynamic Tension*" to GET RESULTS!

"*Dynamic Tension*" is the easy, NATURAL method you can practice in the privacy of your own room—JUST 15 MINUTES EACH DAY—while your scrawny shoulder muscles begin to swell, ripple . . . those spindly arms and legs of yours bulge . . . and your whole body starts to feel "alive," full of zip and go!

One Postage Stamp May Change Your Whole Life!

As I've pictured up above, I'm steadily building broad-shouldered, dynamic MEN—day by day—the country over.

2,000,000 fellows, young and old, have already gambled a postage stamp to ask for my FREE book. They wanted to read and see for themselves how I'm building up scrawny bodies, and how I'm paring down fat, flabby ones—how I'm turning them into breath-taking human dynamos of real MANPOWER.

Take just a few seconds NOW to fill in and mail the coupon at right, and you will receive at once my FREE book—"Everlasting Health and Strength" that PROVES with actual snap-shots what "*Dynamic Tension*" has done for others —what it can do for YOU! Address CHARLES ATLAS, Dept. 9B, 115 East 23rd St., New York 10, N. Y.

FREE

Mail the coupon below *right now* for my FREE illustrated book, "Everlasting Health and Strength." Tells all about "*Dynamic Tension*" methods. Crammed with pictures, facts! Address me personally: CHARLES ATLAS, Dept. 9B, 115 E. 23rd St., New York 10, N. Y.

MAIL COUPON FOR FREE BOOK

CHARLES ATLAS, Dept. 9B,
115 East 23rd St., New York 10, N. Y.

I want the proof that your system of "*Dynamic Tension*" will help make a New Man of me—give me a healthy, husky body and big muscular development. Send me your free book, "Everlasting Health and Strength."

Name.....
(Please print or write plainly)

Address.....

City.....*Zone No. (if any)*.....*State*.....

☐ *Check here if under 16 for Booklet A.*

She Knew What She Wanted

. . . and she stopped at nothing to get it!

ELLEN BERENT was one of the world's most breath-takingly desirable women. But beneath her loveliness was the soul of a tigress—with a ferocity that knew no bounds and tore to shreds the lives of everyone who aroused her insane jealousy!

No wonder the *New York Times* stated that *Leave Her to Heaven* (the million-copy best-seller you can now have FREE) "will hypnotize you until you have turned the last page!" For here is a woman whose passionate career will hold you spellbound. Her whole being flames into deadly rage if she is forced to share even a tiny part of a man's love with anyone else—or with any *thing*. Her lies and betrayals tore the heartstrings of others with crafty cunning. Her jealousy bit like acid into every life that touched her own. This woman, who gave too little and took too much, stopped at *nothing* to get what she wanted!

BOTH FREE—This MILLION-COPY Best-Seller Which Has Just Been Made Into a Smash-Hit Movie

Leave Her to Heaven

and ALSO

SHORT STORIES OF DeMAUPASSANT

Leave Her to Heaven, by Ben Ames Williams, is one of the most fascinating love stories of our time. Seldom has such a vital, violent character been created. Seldom has such an absorbing novel been written. And now you may have it—FREE—as a New Membership Gift from "America's Biggest Bargain Book Club"!

In addition, you ALSO receive, FREE, *Short Stories of DeMaupassant*, containing over 50 tales of love, hate, intrigue, passion and madness—all complete and unexpurgated, the frankest stories of their kind ever written!

Read of Mathilde Loisel in *The Necklace*, who gave the ten best years of her life to cover up one horrible mistake. Read *Love*, *Mademoiselle Fifi*, *Story of a Farm Girl*, *Bed No. 29*—and all the best works that have made De-Maupassant "father of the modern short story."

RACHEL—who avenged France because of just one German kiss too many!

Mail This Coupon to
BOOK LEAGUE OF AMERICA
Dept. NG-2, Garden City, N. Y.

Please send me—FREE—*Leave Her to Heaven* and *Short Stories of DeMaupassant*. Within 5 days I may return them if I wish, without cost or obligation. Otherwise, I will keep them as a gift, and continue to receive forthcoming new monthly selections and BONUS books—at only $1.49 plus few cents postage, for BOTH books.

However, I do NOT have to accept each month's new selection and BONUS book; only six *of my own choice* during the year to fulfill my membership requirement. There are no membership dues for me to pay; no further cost or obligation.

MR. }
MRS. } .....
MISS } (Please print plainly)

ADDRESS ..... Zone No.

CITY ..... (if any) ...

STATE ..... Age, please,

Occupation ..... if under 21...

☐ HANDSOME DE LUXE BINDING: Check box if you wish your masterpieces (monthly BONUS books) in simulated leather, silver stamped, for only 40c extra monthly. We will then also send your FREE gift copy of *Short Stories of DeMaupassant* in this binding—at no extra charge.

Slightly higher in Canada. Address 105 Bond St., Toronto 2, Canada.

Our Double-Gift to You—BOTH Books FREE!

EACH month ONE of the Book League's selections is a modern best-seller by a famous author like Ben Ames Williams, Somerset Maugham, Ernest Hemingway, or Ilka Chase—a book selling for $2.50 and up in the publisher's edition.

The Best of the New—AND of the Old

AND, unlike any other book club, EVERY MONTH YOU RECEIVE A BONUS BOOK in the form of a masterpiece of immortal literature. These volumes of the world's classics are *uniformly bound* in durable cloth. They grow into a handsome lifetime *matched* library. The great authors in this series include Shakespeare, Poe, Oscar Wilde, Balzac, Zola, etc. (Since they are great classics which you will always cherish in your lifetime library you may prefer the beautiful DeLuxe Edition bound in simulated *leather* with *silver* stamping. Just take your choice.)

This club builds for you a library containing the best of the new best-sellers AND the best of the older masterpieces.

You Do NOT Have to Take Every Selection

The outstanding NEW book plus the BONUS book sent to you each month are valued at $3.50 to $4.50 in the publisher's edition. But you get BOTH for only $1.49!

As a member, you do NOT have to accept each monthly selection and BONUS book; only six *of your own choice* during the year. There are no membership dues; there is no further cost or obligation.

Accept This Trial Membership—No Obligation

Send the coupon without money. Read *Leave Her to Heaven* and *Short Stories of DeMaupassant* for five days. If these two books do *not* convince you that this IS "America's Biggest Bargain Book Club," simply return them; pay nothing. But if these volumes DO demonstrate that subscribing to the Book League is the wisest move a reader can make today, then keep them as a gift; your subscription will begin with next month's new selection and BONUS book. Mail coupon for your TWO FREE BOOKS *NOW!* BOOK LEAGUE OF AMERICA, Dept. NG-2, Garden City, N. Y.